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BEN HAMED:

—OR,—

THE CHILDREN OF FATE.

A STORY OF THE EASTERN WORLD.

BY HORACE B. STANIFORD.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER X.

WHAT MORGIANA DID.

Assad knew that it wanted yet two hours of midnight, when he reached his chamber, and as he felt much fatigued he resolved to lie down, but not to sleep. This resolution he maintained for an hour, but at the expiration of that time drowsiness overcame him, and he fell asleep. When he awoke he knew that some one was laying hold upon his shoulder, and he started up quickly. A bright light flashed into his eyes when he opened them, and he saw four mamlouks about his bed.

"Assad of Bagdad," spoke the leader, "arise and follow us, for we have come for thee."

"And wherefore are ye come?" asked the youth, arising at once.

"For thee," answered the mamlouk.

"But who sent thee?"

"Our master whom we obey in all things, and answer not. So follow us quickly, if you would have it well with thee."

Assad knew that there would be no use in asking questions for the present, so he quietly followed the mamlouks from the apartment, and when he reached the court he found Morgiana and Gulnare there in charge of the eunuchs. His hand instinctively dropped to where his sword-belt usually rested, but he found it not, and on looking around he saw that one of his captors had it. Then he knew that resistance would be useless, and he remained quiet; but his movement had not been unobserved.

"Listen, Assad," said the leader of the mamlouks: "We know thy desire, and that thou wouldst flee from us quickly couldst thou overcome us. But our master, whom we obey in all things, has commanded us that we slay the damsel on the instant when thou makest opposition. Remember—we answer not, but obey."

Assad made no reply, and though his rage was maddening, yet he contained himself. He saw his beloved mounted upon her own horse, and Gulnare upon her's; and in a moment more the beast he had ridden was brought forth, and he bidden to mount. Then the four eunuchs started on with the females, and the mamlouks followed with Assad.

Our hero's first object was to notice the course which his captors would pursue, and as soon as the path was fairly gained, he found the way lay to the northward, and he supposed he should be carried to Mosul. After he had assured himself respecting the course he should pursue, he next turned towards Morgiana, but he found that he could not be allowed to speak with her. At the end of an hour the moon arose, and by the light thus afforded, the youth saw that they had nearly crossed the sandy plain, and that a deep wood lay not far ahead. Just as the party reached this wood he turned his head back, and away in the distance, he could see a dark object moving upon the plain. In an instant his heart was lighter, for he knew 'twas the faithful Marouf who was following.

When the sun arose they had passed through the wood and come out upon an open country in which were hills and vales, and running brooks, and trees of fruit. By the side of a small brook the party stopped, and Assad could see that his quiet demeanor had wrought favorably upon the mamlouks, so he asked of the leader whence they meant to carry him.

"To Mosul," answered the mamlouk.

"I am at a loss to understand why this thing is done to me," resumed Assad, modestly. "for I have done no wrong in my whole life, save to God, who is All Merciful; and as for Mosul, I know no one there. Why is it, then?"

"I know nothing at all of it, young man, save that we were ordered to bring you. We have only to obey, and ask no questions. Our master can answer if he pleases, but we cannot."

Assad asked no more, and as soon as the horses were rested the party set out once more. At noon they stopped again, and when the sun had set, they came to a grove of palm-trees which grew upon the banks of a small stream, and here they prepared to encamp for the night. A fire was built, and by means of a cross stick set upon two others the leader of the mamlouks suspended a small kettle over the fire which had been filled with water from the brook, and which one of the eunuchs had carried behind him hung to his saddle. Into this pot the mamlouk put a quantity of pounded coffee, and then prepared for supper. Morgiana, as soon as she saw this, complained that her hands were cold, and asked permission to go to the fire and warm them. This was granted at once, and the maiden accordingly went and stood up by the fire. She watched her opportunity narrowly, and as soon as she could do so without being observed by others, she attracted Assad's attention, and then took a paper from her bosom in which was the powder of bhang. She emptied some of this carefully into the pot, and then returned the paper to her bosom. She remained by the fire a short time longer, and then returned to her seat by the side of Gulnare.

During this time three of the mamlouks had been fixing up a small pavilion made from the housings of their horses, and by the time this was done the meal was ready. The coffee was taken off, and the first cup was passed to Morgiana. Assad watched her sharply, and saw her pour the beverage upon the ground; and when the cup was handed to him he did likewise. But Gulnare, when the cup was handed to her, professed to dislike coffee, and it was not urged upon her. The mamlouks and the eunuchs ate a part of the food they had prepared, but ere they had finished, they were all prostrate and insensible. Assad leaped up with joy as soon as he saw this, and started back as fast as he could run to find Marouf, but he had not to run far, for he found the faithful slave close at hand waiting for the darkness to be settled down more completely.

Marouf came back with his master at once, and when he found how much bhang they had taken, he knew that the mamlouks and eunuchs would not revive for many hours. So he refreshed himself with some of the food that was left, and then went to where the horses were fastened. The eight animals which belonged to the sleepers, he secured together by means of the halters, but not so close but that they had ample room for action. Then he took a fire-brand and tied it to the tail of the leader's horse by means of a green withe, and then turning their heads to the northward he let the fire-brand descend upon the heels of the horse to whom it was fastened. The beast gave a wild snort and started, and the others, when they found the ease they were in, started also, and soon they were flying away like the wind.

"They will stop when they reach Mosul," said Marouf, as he led the horses of his friends up, "and their owners can trudge along on foot."

Morgiana laughed outright at Marouf's speech, and when Assad saw her joy he was light-hearted and joyful, and not one of them forgot to thank the God who made them. At a short distance off, was found the black's horse, and soon the party had turned their heads to the southward, and when they had ridden an hour, they stopped to consult.

"Now what shall be our course?" asked Assad. "We are free from this present affair if our horses hold out, but there may be more danger in store. How shall we go?"

"I should say, return to the place where we must have passed through the mountain gorge, and make sure that we have the right path. It will put us some days back in our journey, but we had better suffer that than be wholly lost, as we may be, if we continue in this way. This is my thought."

Assad next turned to Marouf.

"The damsel has spoken my mind," replied the slave. "There may be danger on the other road now, for we may be followed from Bagdad. But we had better run the risk of that, than subject ourselves to the dangers of an enmity of which we know not the nature. So runs my thought."

"And mine is the same," rejoined Assad. "So let us hasten on our way."

And accordingly they put their horses to the gallop, for the road was plain, and the country open. They left the village where they had met the mamlouks, and the eunuchs far to the right, and on the night of the third day they came to the spot where they had found themselves on the morning after the storm, and here they stopped for the night in the dense forest. On the following morning they set forward again, and ere long they saw the rugged mountain directly ahead of them, and it seemed like a wall of rock which nothing could pass through. But the road was plain before them, and they kept on, and soon they came to the gorge. They were struck with wonder at the scene, and their hearts trembled as they regarded the stupendous walls which arose on either hand, threatening every moment to fall and crush the human worm who should dare to crawl through. So high were these walls, and so narrow was the space, that at the top they seemed to meet like an arch terminating in the very heavens. Marouf led the way through, and when they had all passed the strange place, they heard the same echoes which had startled them on that dark and stormy night when they had lost their way.

About noon they came to the point where another road branched off to the eastward, and Assad knew that this was the road he should have taken, and he knew, too, that it was here where the horses had stopped and pondered.

"Let us stop here and have our dinner," said the youth, "for I am hungry. We ate but little this morning."

"And what shall we eat, my master?" asked Marouf.

"How! Is our food all gone?"

"Yes—every particle."

"Then we must find some. I am sure I saw a she goat run into the bushes just before we reached this place."

"It was a goat, my master, for I noticed it. So if you will stay and make a fire, I will take my bow and go after the goat. But even should I miss her, I shall find something."

Assad agreed to the plan, and accordingly the stout slave seized his bow, and having secured his horse, he plunged into the wood in the direction he had seen the goat take. After he had gone, Assad gathered together a lot of dry sticks, and having found some grass and leaves which were crisp, he took his steel and flint and set fire to the mass, and ere long he had a brisk fire under way.

"Now we are ready for the meat," he said, with a light laugh.

"Hark!" uttered Morgiana. "He is returning, and of course he must have something, or he would not be coming back so soon."

"By Allah!" cried Assad, leaping to his feet, "that sounds like the tramp of horses, and they are coming down this road which we have not yet travelled, but into which we were about to enter."

For an instant the damsel turned pale, but in a moment more, she said:

"If they are coming that way what have we to fear? That is not the way to come from Bagdad, nor yet from Mosul. They are probably honest travellers, and will do us no harm."

"They are coming from that direction, surely," resumed Assad, who had been listening, and had now made sure that the coming horses were approaching from the direction he was about to pursue towards the Persian frontier. "I wish Marouf were here."

But before the youth could look for his stout slave, the horsemen—half a score of them—had come in sight, and, be they friend or foe, all escape was cut off.

CHAPTER XI.

STARTLING EVENTS.

Our travellers watched the coming of the strangers with much anxiety, and a fearful shudder shook Morgiana's frame, as she noticed that they wore the garb of the mamlouks of Bagdad, and as they drew still nearer, Assad recognized in their leader one of the principal mamlouks of the quarter where he had lived when with the Syndic, and the name of this mamlouk was Danish. The youth would have made his escape if he could, but the horses were fast, and he knew that 'twould be useless to make the attempt.

"Ah! By Allah!" cried Danish, as he came up and saw Assad's face, "how came you here? We have been two days' journey beyond here, and now we have come to find you behind us."

"Do you mean that you seek me?" asked the youth.

"Ay, we seek thee, and the damsel called Morgiana, who fled from the house of Ali Shir, the Syndic of the merchants. So here we find you both, and you will go with us back to Bagdad."

Assad looked to see if Marouf were not returning, for he felt that with the assistance of the gigantic black he would give the mamlouks battle. But Marouf was not to be seen anywhere. Danish seemed to be looking for the same thing, for after he had noticed the fourth horse he turned to Assad, and said:

"There was one more whom we were to take, the black slave, Marouf. Where is he?"

"He has left us," answered Assad, "and I fear me that he will not return."

But the mamlouk did not believe this, so he bade five of his followers to hide themselves in the wood, and there wait until Marouf returned, and then take him and bring him along. Then Danish caused the two girls to be placed in their saddles, and also bade Assad to mount. The youth was enraged, but he was not blinded. He saw that the mamlouks were stout men, eleven in number, and he knew that they were well versed in arms; so to offer them combat would have been but simple madness. He mounted into his saddle, and when he was ready to start, the five mamlouks whom Danish had selected to remain for the capture of Marouf, led their horses out of sight into the wood, and then the rest were ordered to gather around Assad and ride in his company, while Danish himself rode on ahead with Morgiana and Gulnare, for it afterward appeared that Hassan, the son of Ali Shir, had offered the mamlouk a large sum of gold, if he would return the damsel safely to him. And in this way the party set out. Morgiana wept bitter tears, and her lover bowed her head in shame and anguish, for he felt that if he had listened to the fears of his beloved on that stormy night when the fatal road was taken, all this would not have happened.

In the meantime, Marouf was in the deep wood all unconscious of these things. When he left his young master, he had not gone far before he found the tracks of the she-goat in a spot of sand where a great tree had been overturned, and having noticed the direction the animal had taken, he started off in pursuit. At length he saw the goat at some distance ahead, and he discharged an arrow, but a small twig which he had not noticed in his eagerness turned the shaft aside, and the goat was soon out of sight once more. This mishap only served to make the man more eager, and with swift steps he plunged on. At length he saw the goat again, and this time he took more care, and his arrow pierced her heart. He hastened forward and swung the animal over his shoulder, and then started back towards the place where he had left his companions. At length he reached the road, but the fire had gone down, and his friends were not to be seen anywhere. He threw down the goat, and on the next instant the five mamlouks rushed out from the woods.

"Ho, Marouf!" cried one of them, "thou art our prisoner, so surrender thyself without parley!"

"Where are Assad, and Morgiana, and Gulnare?" the slave asked, looking eagerly around.

"They have gone on ahead," answered the mamlouk.

"And are they prisoners?"

"Yes."

"And you have been left to take me?"

"Yes."

Marouf laughed most scornfully.

"Go," he said, "and follow your master, and be sure that if Assad is carried to Bagdad, I shall go after him. Go, now, and trouble me not, for this thing hath made me mad, and I cannot withstand the evil temptation, if thou provokest me."

"Out, thou black dog! thou son of Eblis! Offer us resistance, and thy head shall roll in the dirt!"

"Touch me not, but go thy way," said Marouf, now made angry almost beyond endurance.

"Vile slave, this instant lay down thy sword and mount and follow us, or we'll carry thy head to Bagdad while thy foul carcass remains here to feed the beasts of the forests! Obey me, thou black son of an unbelieving mother, or—"

Before he could finish the vile words he would have spoken, Marouf had drawn his huge sword, and with one blow laid the head of the mamlouk at his feet. The other four, upon seeing this, instantly drew their weapons, and set upon the black with all their might; but he was prepared for them. Seizing his steel bow in his left hand, and using it as a buckler with which to ward off some of the blows that were aimed at him, he set to the work with vigor. The mamlouks had mistaken their man, for he swept them down as though they had been children, and in less than three minutes from the time when the first man fell, the other four were lying dead upon the earth.

Marouf simply wiped his sword upon the skirt of one of the mamlouk's vests, and then having sheathed it, he mounted his horse and set off towards Bagdad, and by the middle of the afternoon he reached the edge of the forest and saw his companions and their captors at no great distance ahead on the plain. He kept them in sight until nightfall, and when they encamped he was close to them.

"Here we will rest for the night," said Danish, as he came to a place where a grove of nut trees grew. They had passed the village where Assad had rested on the second day of his journey, and the place was some leagues behind them.

"Here we can rest till early morning, and then, if we start betimes, we can take dinner in the city of El Blan, where the Emir Mousfa rules, and before dark reach Bagdad, the city of our home."

So the horses were stopped, and the females taken off, and then one of the mamlouks proceeded to build a fire. A small pot was suspended over it, and into this some coffee berries were put to parch, and when they were parched and pounded up the water was poured in. Morgiana saw that the mess would be unsavory and filthy, and she thought a little bhang would not hurt it. So she took out her paper, but in her eagerness she did not notice that one of the mamlouks stood leaning against a tree near at hand, and when she poured in the powder he saw her. He went to the pot and smelled of it, and he detected the bhang in an instant; so he went at once to his master and told him what had happened. Danish started towards the maiden, who stood trembling with affright, for she had seen the mamlouk's movement, and with one blow of his palm upon her cheek, he felled her to the earth. Assad saw it all, and with a loud cry of rage he drew his sword, and before any one could prevent him, he struck the head of Danish clean off, so that it rolled down into the fire. On the next moment he was seized from behind by two of the mamlouks, and securely bound, and but for one who was more thoughtful than his fellows, he would have instantly been put to death.

As soon as the youth was bound, the coffee was poured from the pot, and the five remaining mamlouks proceeded to eat their meal with only water to drink. After this, Morgiana and Gulnare were bound together, and then two of the mamlouks were set to watch while the remaining three slept; the body of Danish having been first covered up and laid by his horse.

Thus passed away some two hours, and at the end of that time, one of the mamlouks who was on the watch thought he detected something moving on the plain near to the oasis where they were encamped. He stooped down from sight, and thus watched the object which had attracted his attention, until he was sure it had life. Upon this he called to his companion, and they both regarded the thing for some time.

"It surely moves," said one.

"Ay, for I can see it," returned the other.

"It smells us here. I have heard how these hungry beasts will follow a caravan all day, without showing themselves, and then even wait at night until the guard are set, and the others all asleep. But see—he is making for the horses. He smells them first."

"It cannot be a lion," said the second speaker, "for I have seen a lion on the desert in the night time, and he did not move like that. He crouched lower, and I could hear his tail as it lashed the dry sand behind him."

"It may be a bear," said the other. "It moves more like a bear, and surely is large enough for one."

"Dare you fire upon it?"

"We might both be ready, and then if I missed you could be ready to stand in the gap while I selected a second arrow."

Awhile longer the two mamlouks watched the moving object, and then they agreed to shoot at it. They both prepared their bows at the same time, and as the dark object came nearer still to the horses, one of them whispered to the other:

"He smells the blood of Danish. Ah—that's what's called him here. 'Tis fresh blood."

"So it is," returned the other. "But see—he comes too near. In a short while longer he may spring. Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Then fire you first."

An arrow was discharged, surely and swiftly, but the object made no motion to indicate that he was wounded. On the next instant another arrow was discharged, and this time the thing leaped up, made a few springs towards the camp, and then sank down. The two mamlouks immediately called their three companions, and quickly lighting a torch by the decaying embers of the fire, they hastened to the spot where the animal had fallen, and when they reached the place they were not a little startled at beholding a black slave of huge stature, with a heavy sword in his hand.

"By Allah!" cried one of the mamlouks, "it is Elzader's escaped slave—'tis Marouf! Put up thy sword, thou black dog, or we'll shoot thee to death with arrows."

Marouf saw that two of the mamlouks had their bows ready, and he knew that they could quickly despatch him, if they chose so to do; so he laid down his sword, and suffered himself to be taken captive. It was then found that both the arrows had hit him—the first having entered the calf of the left leg, which he had pulled through and thrown away. The second had struck him in the side, and in such a manner that the head had passed down to the hip, he having been in a stooping posture when the shaft struck him. This made it utterly impossible for him either to walk or run, and of course he was easily captured, seeing that his sword could have no effect upon those who might stand at a distance and shoot him with arrows.

When Marouf had been brought to the place of encampment he asked that Assad might be allowed to extract the arrow from his side. There was some consultation among the mamlouks, but they remembered that their only reward for the black slave would be in case he was returned alive, and they consented to unbind the youth and let him perform the operation. Assad yet slept, and when he was aroused, and made acquainted with the work he was to do, he wept with new anguish, for he had hoped that his faithful follower might escape. However, when he knew how dangerously Marouf was wounded he hastened forward. He embraced the slave first, and having spoken a few words of cheer, he proceeded to examine the wound. He had studied medicine some, and had become much acquainted with the structure of the human frame, for the Syndic, his master, had hoped to make money by his skill.

One of the mamlouks held a torch, and Assad saw that the arrow could never be drawn out by the way it had entered, for it had a barbed head, and to cut through that distance would be dangerous. So he caused Marouf to bend his leg up as much as possible, and then with all his strength he drove the arrow down until the head had shown itself through the flesh upon the thigh. Then he broke off the feathered part of the shaft which was yet out from the side, and by means of a strong cord attached to the head the remaining part was pulled out. Assad then washed and dressed the wound as well as he was able, and Marouf laid down to rest. But before the mamlouks left him they asked him concerning their five companions who had been left to capture him. He was smarting under the cruel wound, and in his rage he told how he had killed them all.

Assad shuddered as he heard the story, for he feared that the revenge of the caliph, when he learned of the death of six of his best mamlouks, would fall heavily upon him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RETURN OF A FRIEND, BUT THE MAKING THEREBY OF A MOST BITTER ENEMY.

As soon as the first signs of daylight were visible, the mamlouks were astir, and having learned where Marouf had left his horse one of them went and brought it, after which the wounded man was assisted to his saddle. The body of Danish was secured upon the horse he had ridden when alive, and shortly afterwards the party set out. They reached the city of El Bhan before noon, and ere sunset they entered Bagdad by the gate of Abu Jaafar, and proceeded at once to the palace of the caliph. Haroun al Raschid had retired from the council chamber, but he admitted one of the mamlouks to his pacesence, from whom he heard the whole story.

"Now by Allah!" cried the caliph, in a rage, "these slaves shall die the death! Go, deliver the girls at once to Ali Shir, and cast the others into prison."

"But if Elkader should demand his slaves?"

"By the beard of the Prophet, let him do so if he dare! He should not keep such foul dogs in his employ. See that the black dog is cured of his hurts before he dies, for death might be sweet to a suffering body. Send a physician in to him."

"I hear to obey," returned the mamlouk; and then he left the sublime presence of the Prince of the Faithful.

Ere the darkness of night had fallen upon the earth, Assad and Marouf were plunged into a cold, deep prison, and Morgiana and Gulnare were returned to the dwelling of the Syndic, Ali Shir. The merchant had returned to his house, and when the mamlouks came he was there to receive them. He paid them five hundred pieces of gold, as he had promised, and then they took their departure, and when they were gone he turned to Gulnare, and asked:

"Why did you leave my dwelling?"

The girl hung down her head, but ere she could speak, Morgiana replied for her:

"She was not to blame in the least, my master, for she went at my bidding, so let all your reproof fall upon me. It was I who enticed her away, and she went that she might serve me."

Then the merchant bade Gulnare leave the apartment, and when she was gone he turned to the beautiful maiden who remained standing before him.

"Now, wicked woman," he exclaimed, "what caused you to flee from my house? Be sure that you speak the truth, for if falsehood be told to me you shall suffer much. Tell me—why did you flee?"

"Because I wished not to marry with your son, my master," replied Morgiana, trembling.

"Ay—and why this wish? Speak truly now. Who was it fled with you?"

"The youth called Assad fled with me."

"And you fled with him from love?"

"I did love him, O, my master, for God, who is all-wise, made love in my heart when first I saw him. He was like the bright morning to my eyes, and like the soft, dropping of peace to my soul. My eyes beheld him, and my soul enveloped him as with a garment of pure love."

"And wherefore this vile change in thy heart? Do damsels seek husbands from among slaves, when the noble seek their hand? By Allah, slave, thou hast done a wicked thing, and thou shalt be punished. Hassan had loved thee with his whole soul, and on account of thy beauty he had meant to make you his wife. But you shall be his slave now—his bond-woman—and he shall possess all thy beauty, and you shall have no husband. Thy children shall not be of his station, but only slaves. Thus will I do to thee, in punishment for the wicked deed thou hast done."

"Hear me, O, my master!" cried the afflicted maiden, falling upon her knees and clasping her hands. "I have done no falsehood, for the youth with whom I fled has not yet made me his wife. I am as I left thee, save that I have gone and returned."

"And that is enough, for thereby thou hast cast disgrace upon my son, and made him mourn. How think you it sounds to my ears, when I hear men say: 'Behold Hassan, the son of the Syndic of all the merchants. She whom he had selected for his wife, hated him, and went away with a slave youth.' This I hear daily, and it hath almost made my son mad. By Allah, thou shalt suffer. Gulnare shall attend thee no more, but one whom I can trust shall attend thee until Hassan goes to his own house, and then he shall take thee with him."

Morgiana wept and groaned in agony, but the hard-hearted merchant sympathized with her not at all.

"Now go to your own apartment," he said, "and in due time your servant shall come. Remember, thou shalt suffer for thy wickedness, for thou hast brought shame upon us by thy course, and our names are in the streets and in the market-places, and men say: 'Lo, Hassan! His bride loved him not because of his evil temper, and of his unbecoming aspect.' While thou, evil girl, knowest how pleasing thy youth, my son, is, both of speech and of comely aspect."

Morgiana was abashed by this, for she knew that Ali Shir lied, seeing that his son was both ugly in mind and in person. But she dared not speak her true thoughts, for her master was already angered, and she wished not to add to the flame. So without speaking further, she went away to her own apartment, where she found everything as she had left it, when she went away. She threw herself upon a couch, and there gave way to a copious flood of tears.

But she did not weep long, for she knew that tears would be of no avail now; and, moreover, she had wit enough to know that she must study deeply upon the course that would serve her best. She felt sad and unhappy enough to weep without stopping, but she believed that in her woman's soul she had yet enough of wit and courage to overcome, at least, the worst of the evils that threatened her. It would seem evil enough to lose Assad, but yet to be the mere slave of Hassan el Shir—to be the victim of his base passions, while no nuptial veil shielded her from dishonor—was a worse thing, and from that she meant to escape. She knew not what had become of her lover, and though she feared much for him, yet she could not think that his master would allow danger to befall him. To be sure he had slain a mamlouk, but then—then—

She tried to persuade herself that Assad had full justification for the deed, but she knew that no code of justice could exculpate him, for he did the deed to revenge a simple blow which had been given her; and that she deserved the blow, from having been so careless in the work she undertook, she could not deny. However, she was cut short in her reflections by the entrance of the woman who was to wait upon her. She turned, and a shudder crept through her frame as she recognized the slave Elsena.

Elsena was not more than twenty-and-two years of age, and her hair was black as night. She possessed a straight, elegant form, though she was taller than she should have been for symmetry. In feature she had some beauty, but a proud, overbearing spirit, and an evil disposition, had worn away all the soft lines from her face, and she now looked hard and cold. Between her and Morgiana there had never been any love, but only a deep seated jealousy. Morgiana knew Elsena's secret. Elsena loved Hassan—had loved him a long while, and she hoped to be his wife; and when she found that the object of her affections had bestowed his heart upon the beautiful Morgiana, her rage knew no bounds.

Now when Morgiana had fled, and Hassan thought she would never come back, he fell to weeping excessively, and Elsena went in unto him to comfort him, and so well did she play her part, that he kissed her in gratitude, and swore that she should be his wife if Morgiana came not back. But since that hour, Elsena had discovered that his affection for her was not strong, and she feared that the return of Morgiana would blast all her newly raised hopes. And one other thing she feared, too: The merchant might never consent to his son's making her his wife, else he would never have made her serve other slaves.

Hence it was with a strange mixture of evil feelings, that the dark slave girl came in to wait upon the beautiful damsel. Jealousy, fear and revenge were all ranking in her bosom. Ali Shir only knew that Elsena hated the fugitive, and that she would be true to the interests of his son. He had no idea of the deep meaning of her soul.

Elsena entered the apartment and kneeled at Morgiana's feet.

"Command me, my mistress," she said.

"Kneel not to me," quickly returned Morgiana. "Rather command thou me, for thou knowest that I am under thy control."

"As thou wilt," said Elsena, arising to her feet. "And since thou art so easy of management, I may simply say that you are not to leave your own apartment without I am in your company. So our master has commanded."

Morgiana was about to make some reply, when the door of the apartment opened, and young Hassan entered. He was, as has already been stated, just of age, and about to go into business for himself. He was short and unwieldy in person, with red hair, and a freckled face. His features were not at all regular, and though his rich dress, and a certain polish of wealth, made him appear respectable, yet few women could have loved him, for his mind was no better than his face. Perhaps, Elsena loved him more for the wealth he possessed than for himself as a man.

Hassan entered and bade Elsena leave the apartment. She turned a flashing eye upon Morgiana as she received this order, but she dared not disobey. But a curious thought struck her. Between that apartment and the bed-chamber, was a closet which was only separated by heavy, damask curtains; and into this closet Elsena went. She walked quite heavily until she had reached the extremity of the bed-room, and then removing her shoes, she glided noiselessly back, and took her station behind the curtain where she could not only hear all that was said, but where she could see all that passed, by means of a small rent there was in the seam of the fabric.

Hassan's face wore a gloomy aspect when he entered, but upon beholding the features of the beautiful slave the cloud passed away, and all his old love returned. He sat down upon a cushion, and asked Morgiana to sit by his side. He took her hand and kissed it, and then looked tenderly into her face.

"Why did you leave me?" he asked, more in regret than in anger.

"It was through the influence of an old sheik who came to me and bid me go," answered the damsel.

"Was it so? O, loved one, deceive me not. Did you not go away with a slave whom you loved?"

"You have asked me plainly, and I will answer thee the same. I did love the youth who went with me. But as God is all-wise, and knows the hearts of all his creatures, it was not the work of that youth which led me from Bagdad."

"By Allah, I am glad of that. And hast thou married?"

"No, my master. I know not man save as the infant knoweth him."

"Then my father shall relent. You will yet be my wife?"

Morgiana bowed her head and thought for an instant ere she answered. She knew that a single word would even now change Hassan's feelings in a moment. She knew the evil passions that governed him, and she knew that 'twas only her beauty that held them now in check. Her absence had made him angry, and he had despaired of ever seeing her again; but now that she had come back, his first emotions were those of pleasure, for in truth his whole heart had been enchained. And there was one other thing which the damsel had wit enough to understand. She saw that the simple fact of the father's having peremptorily decided that she should not now be his son's wife, had helped to warm him towards her. All this ran through her mind in a moment, and then came the one other thought: If she did not become his wife, she must become his meanest slave, and lose all that could make her beautiful in the sphere of truth and honor. In either case there might be some chance of escape. So she raised her eyes, and while the tears started forth, she simply murmured—"yes."

She did not mean those tears for deception. She could not have helped them if she would. But he thought they were for him—that they were of joy that she had once more gained him to her side; and under the influence of this feeling, he caught her to his bosom, and his love was poured forth in passionate verses.

At that moment they heard a noise near them, like some one smothering, and they listened; but as it was not repeated, no more notice was taken of it.

"I am of age," said Hassan, "and may now married at any moment. Say, then, when the marriage ceremony shall take place?"

"Alas, my master, I am worn and fatigued now. Let the affair be postponed for a while."

"I shall please you, my heart's idol," cried Hassan, now completely enraptured. "Only let it be as soon as possible, for I fear I may lose you again."

"As soon as I become rested and calm once more, my master. But now I am faint and weary, and I must guard against a severe sickness, for I have had much to try my nerves, and much to shake my whole system. But the time shall come."

Hassan saw that the damsel was faint, and he remained with her no longer. He kissed her between the eyes, and then took his leave. Two hours before he held only bitter enmity in his heart for the fugitive affianced; but now all his love had returned stronger than ever. He was not only enamored, but he was truly mad with love for the beautiful slave.

As Hassan went forth, the slave-girl Elsena glided away from her hiding-place, and her face was the very picture of a demon.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SARDINIA.

No one can cross its frontier without being struck with the contrast it presents to the other Italian States. While they are decaying like a corpse, it is flourishing like the chestnut tree of its own mountains. The very faces of the people may tell you that the country is free and prosperous. Its citizens walk about with the cheerful, active air of men who have something to do and to enjoy, and not with the listless, despondING, heartsick look which marks the inhabitants of the other States of Italy. Here, too, you miss that universal beggary and vagabondism that disfigure and pollute all the other countries of the Peninsula. What rich loam the ploughman turns up! What magnificent vines shade its plains! Public works are in progress, railways have been formed, and new houses are building. Not fewer than a hundred houses were built in Turin last year, which is more, I verily believe, than in all the other Italian towns out of Piedmont taken together.—*Wylie's Pilgrimage.*

LOVE CHARMS.

In lower Saxony, the young girls gather sprigs of St. John's wort, on the eve of St. John, and secretly suspend them on the walls of their chambers, with certain mysterious ceremonies. The state of the plant on the following morning indicates their future fate. If fresh and unDrooping, it foretells a prosperous marriage; if fading and dying, the reverse. The plant is influenced by the condition in which it is placed, and those who have damp walls are the more likely to have prosperous marriages than those whose walls are as dry as they should be.—*Hibberd's Brambles and Bay Leaves.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

JENNY SILL—A LOVE BALLAD.

BY ROLANTHE.

I know a laughing, blue-eyed maid;
She lives adown the hill,
And wears a gown and hood of blue—
Her name is Jenny Sill;
Her lips are like twin cherries red,
Her cheeks like roses bloom;
And she is happier far than queen,
That e'er sat on a throne.

O, soon the merry bells will ring,
And peal a gladsome chime;
And on a coming May-day morn,
Sweet Jenny will be mine;
For just one year ago to day,
She said she'd be my bride;
And that she'd share my joys and cares—
Sweet Jenny, true and tried!

And there we'll rent a little cot,
Down by the busy mill;
And there we'll pass our happy lives—
I, and my Jenny Sill!
O, blessings on my Jenny's head,
May joy e'er hover near!
And may she never know grim care,
Or shed one bitter tear!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE DEAF MUTE.

BY MRS. E. WELLMONT.

It was in the midst of one of those pitiless storms which often occur previous to the "setting in of winter," that a faint ringing was heard at our front door. It almost made the family group shudder, to think that any human being was exposed in such an inclement night; and much more were our sympathies aroused as a little pedler and his sister stood before us, plaintively asking: "Will you buy any essences, matches, needles and tape," and so on, till the whole catalogue of his small basket was run through. We thought the little pedler spoke; but really it was the little girl who adroitly stood foremost and read over the enumerated articles.

"Jessie, my brother," said she, "is deaf and dumb—and so I go along with him to sell for him—but he is a bright boy for all that—he knows money as well as I do, and his eyesight is a great deal sharper. I should have been run over many a time, but for Jessie;" and all this volubility went foremost of the answer whether we were ready to purchase? Who could refuse to ask such little vagrants within a shelter, to bid them warm themselves over the silvered register, at the risk of soiling the nicest velvet carpet?

We all wanted essences and perfumery, and thread, needles and tape; and the little basket was nearly emptied in a thrice. Jessie looked his gratitude from a pair of the most beautiful eyes that ever were bestowed upon a human face; they seemed to fill the vacuum which the loss of speech and hearing occasioned; and as with his mute signs his sister interpreted his language, it was, "God bless you, kind friends; we never met with such luck in any stormy night before."

Little Jenny, the interpreter for Jessie, gave us their family history. "Father could not get much work, and mother was sick, and they all lived in one room; and kind ladies came to see mother, and brought her lots of nice things, but she hated to tell them that they were out of wood, and that her sight had so failed her by working late, that without a pair of spectacles she would be obliged to stop; and besides, mother had such a cough, and her side ached, and sometimes," said little Jenny, "she says her heart aches worse than all," and she cast her eyes down, and wiped them with the corner of her apron. But the sight of so much silver money soon sent away her childish grief, and little Jessie looked as if his fortune was made.

It is needless to say we found our way at the earliest opportunity to the home of these children. At the lower house, in a dismal alley upon the ground floor we found it; for we saw Jessie standing at the window sewing some buttons on a shirt just finished. We knew we should be welcome where such good tidings had gone before us. Jenny brushed out a chair, and dusted a cricket for our feet, and took our muff, and said very sweetly, "the lots of money we brought home made mother sleep better last night."

There seemed an intuitive sensibility in these children, and when we began to talk with the mother, both of them made an errand abroad, as if the recital of their history in their presence would be all the more painful, if not suppressed in some particulars. We had seen such fine feelings, such delicacy before, where homely garments covered the form, and a poor apartment held the tenant, whose soul was run in a far more ethereal mould than some bedecked with the most elegant apparel; we read such sensibilities in these children before their mother disclosed it.

"My poor Jessie," said the sick woman, "seems to be an unfortunate child, he is a deaf mute. I could bear it all very well, but for the disappointment of his father—he is so wholly unreconciled to the ordering of Providence, that since he has known his child's infirmities and deprivations, he does nothing but repine at our lot. He placed great hopes upon Jessie. When he was born he designed he should leave his mark in the world; and now when he goes abroad and sees other boys bright and social, who can hear all sorts of sounds, and whose fathers have some encouragement to labor for them, it makes him heart-sick, and he wishes Jessie had never been born. It is unnatural and strange, but his disappointment is such, I do not think he loves him as he does Jenny."

"But," replied the visitor, "did you never think if Jessie could be sent to the asylum established for this class of unfortunates, one half of your trial would be palliated? for they are made so comfortable and happy there, and are taught to understand each other, so that a more cheerful home than that cannot be found."

"But Jessie's father, ma'am, wouldn't pay a cent for him if he could, and since he has given the child up, his temper seems spoiled, and I know his habits are not what they once were. He is very tried, and even justifies his conduct on the score that he has nothing to live for, since his boy can never make anything; and as to Jenny, although he loves her dearly in his way, yet he says there is no field for woman in this world, they don't carry down to posterity the honors of a house and a glory of distinction, like boys. Such talk as this, my good lady, unnerves me."

We would not extend our remarks which were not needed to render the mother submissive—she was already so; our efforts were directed to see what could be done for Jessie. We knew Mr. G. who had two children in this institution, and we immediately wrote to him to know how we should manage to put Jessie there; and so soon were the preliminaries arranged, that in less than a month from the time the little pedler rang at our door he was safely sheltered, and in the process of receiving an education among many others, who like himself were thus deprived of two valuable senses, for which, until we took this case into consideration, was rarely made by us a subject of gratitude that such was not our doom.

Now Jessie was much missed in the home he had left. His mother, with all the yearnings of a fond love, added to a pity for her child, which made him tenfold dearer by every adverse circumstance, mourned daily for him; yet she cheerfully endured her sacrifice, hoping some power might be developed in her child which would arouse the affectionate feelings of his father. Jessie, too, missed his mother and sister—he would have loved his father, but he repulsed him—and, alas, he keenly felt why. He could not in his new home forget some of the satisfactions of his old one. He wondered who threaded his mother's needles now? and if Jenny could do all the plain sewing which they both did together—for as Jessie could not play with other boys, his attention was turned to quiet pursuits with his sister, and his labors were no trifling item in the weekly discharge of small debts. He wondered, too, if Jenny ever went peddling with Sam Lee—and whether they ever again met with such luck as he did? And how much his little sister talked about her brother, and how often she predicted he would yet make somebody for father to be proud of; for didn't the teacher write back to them that Jessie would make a fine penman, and a graceful scholar? "and mother," added Jenny, with her sparkling eyes, "was there ever a handsomer boy than my brother? Clarence Long says he should be willing to be deaf and dumb, to have such an intellectual beauty; and Mrs. Prince once told me, 'well, Jenny, you have all the talk, but Jessie has great thoughts he never expresses.' I'm sure I had rather he would be a thousand times handsomer, and more learned and graceful than me—but father wont love him, because he will never make an orator. Mother, if great original thoughts are sent out in books, don't people think as much of the authors, as if they spoke in public to crowded assemblies?"

Evidently Jenny had a tact for starting questions quite pleasing to her mother, and her companionship made many a day of debility and labor pass off with fewer sighs and less of the heartache.

And now Jessie wrote letters home—the chiography was elegant, and the ideas and style were not inferior in point of execution. The father was compelled to admit "it was creditable to a deaf mute." Jenny strove by every method to speak her brother's praises in her father's presence, and at length when his themes were pronounced as the best in his class, and characterized as of the highest order of intellect, the daughter's enthusiasm did seem to open an aperture in her father's heart; but the fountain again sealed. Yet there was a marked improvement in the father's demeanor and habits. Indeed he had quitted the wine cup entirely, and having established himself in a clerkship in the city, the family removed to very respectable lodgings, and the mother and daughter really found a much happier home; they longed for Jessie's vacation, that he, too, might see it. "And what a blessing it was he was not born blind," said Jenny.

But we must hurry over about Jessie's return; for we are obliged to stop our even thread of existence, to say that Jenny is sick—first, only slightly, and then alarmingly ill. We cannot record the solicitude which this event awakened, nor describe how, lost to reason, she raved in her delirium about her father's cruelty to Jessie; that which she had hitherto suppressed, could be kept no longer, and the agony of her madness reduced her strength, so that she died in convulsions.

This unexpected blow, which as in a moment sent desolation into a home by quenching its light, and rending the very soul of each inmate, made the father more rebellious still. Instead of awakening contrition, it produced hardness of heart and murmuring. And yet there sat the stricken mother, feeling how just were God's dealings, and continually admitting her own convictions that her husband must be taught by a severe discipline that what we see not now we shall find revealed hereafter. Long and agonizing was the struggle to that father—to Jessie it was, however, but a fresh incitement to fill the place his sister's loss occasioned, and by a chastened submission, such as perfects a lovely character, did he seem every day to attain new improvement in every department of science, and above all, the practical uses to which all learning may be applied.

The sorrowful night of bereavement gave place in the end to a morning of joy. Jessie, from a beloved pupil, entered upon the duties of a teacher, and ere long was married to a lady who had herself graduated from the same school, and as her father's wealth and influence were extensive, Mr. James Lenox, the father of Jessie, lived long enough to feel that an honorable distinction awaited him, in being known as his father; and that after illustrious orators and political aspirants are forgotten, the name of his son will be perpetuated, and his princely donations to found institutions for the relief of the suffering, will cause the deaf mute pedler boy to receive the homage of thousands—while more than all, and better than all, the father of such a son, lived to acknowledge how just is God in all his ways, even when we are walking in obscurity.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

DOST THOU REMEMBER, NELLIE?

BY L. AUGUSTUS JONES.

Dost thou remember, Nellie dear, our happy cottage home?
Where we in childhood's merry hours together oft did roam?
When life seemed bright and joyous, while true hearts lingered near?
When that bright smile was on thy brow, thine eye undimmed by tears;
But sorrow now is on thy brow, and tears steal down thy cheek,
I hear thy sweet voice tremble when of those days you speak;
For now within the churchyard lone, where willows sadly wave,
The ones we loved the dearest are slumbering in the grave.

Dost thou remember, Nellie dear, how sadly we did weep,
When our father and our mother both side by side did sleep?
When stranger voices told us in harsh, unfeeling tones,
That we were little orphans in this cold world alone?
That we must leave the cottage we fondly dreamed was ours,
The garden near we loved so dear, with all its blooming flowers?
How we lingered, hand in hand, by the little vine-clad door,
And wept again to think that it was home no more?

Dost thou remember, Nellie dear, thy brother's bitter woe,
When gazing in my face, you said, "Dear brother, must we go?"
I took thee in my arms, and kissed thy blooming cheek;
For in that hour of agony I strove in vain to speak.
And then they took us far away, where strangers on us gazed,
And many a voice did murmur forth thy beauty there to praise;
And thy little arms around me you clasped with looks of pain,
And whispered, "Let us go to our cottage-home again!"

Dost thou remember, Nellie dear, how long I've toiled for thee?
That thy young heart so true might ever happy be?
And now I gaze upon thee in happiness and pride;
A noble heart hath won thee—fame soon wilt be his bride.
I have guided thee, dear sister, to happiness and love,
And shielded thee from sorrow wherever thou didst rove;
And my task now is ended, my labor is most blest,
Now may I seek my cottage-home in solitude to rest.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

ROSABELLA LYLE.

BY MARY A. LOWELL.

EVERYTHING was quiet at the genteel boarding-house kept by the Misses Peterson, on a hot morning in August. The fashionably furnished parlor showed only the brown Holland cases with which the careful housekeepers used to preserve their furniture, during the entire summer. The piano was locked, and its polished surface was hidden by one of those India rubber abominations, which, however useful they may be in protecting the case of the instrument, are offensive to the eyes as well as to the olfactories. Everything, in short, betokened that the boarders had departed on the summer tour, which not to make in these days is sufficient to stamp one as not belonging to the best society. Whatever state the funds are in, Niagara, Cape May, or the Springs must be "done," or you will certainly lose caste.

One of Miss Peterson's boarders, however, remained at home, during the entire month. Rosabella Lyle was an heiress. Perhaps no one ever thought less of a fortune than Miss Lyle did of hers. She had enjoyed all the rights, privileges and comforts which money brings, from her childhood, without thinking or caring from whence they came; and she took them as we take the air, the sunlight, or any other free gift that comes to us without labor or anxiety.

But now, Rosabella Lyle was an orphan; and although she could not be supposed to feel very deep grief for a father whom she had seldom seen, and having never known a mother's affection, yet she sometimes felt bitterly that she was quite alone in the world, and that no one existed, upon whom she had any claim of relationship or natural affection.

Her mother, a fair, gentle woman, had died when Rosabella was still an infant. Captain Lyle had returned from a prosperous voyage, with a heart full of hope, to find that he was bereaved; and placing his child, with its nurse, under the care of the Misses Peterson, now established in a boarding-house, in an airy and healthy location, he made every arrangement for her comfort, on the most liberal scale that could be devised, and was again on his way to a distant port. Before he returned, he had received a very flattering offer to enter business at South America, and finding himself now free, he availed at once of the opportunity, and had soon amassed a fortune.

When Rosabella was five years old, he came home for a few months. But he had no taste for nursery matters; and as he only frightened his little girl with his huge beard and whiskers, he did not succeed in attaching her to him very strongly. She, on her part, much preferred Nora, the nurse, or even her little dog Fidele, to her papa.

At ten years, she again saw him; but the chilling winds of the northern climate proved too trying to the frame and the temper of one who had so long luxuriated in a warmer atmosphere; and the father and daughter got on together no better than before. Nora and Fidele were still his rivals in her heart. Seven years later, the news of Captain Lyle's death was announced; and it is no disparagement to the sensibility of our heroine, when we affirm that the loss of Fidele, who had died of old age a few months before, drew more tears from her eyes than the news of her father's death.

An intimate friend of her father's school-boy life, was chosen by him as her guardian; and this gentleman, who was hitherto unknown to Rosabella, assumed the care of the large fortune which was now hers. Her new guardian, Doctor Phillips, had never married; so that, having no house in which to receive his ward, he permitted her to remain with the Misses Peterson. A few interviews, in which he vainly made her try to understand something of what he was doing with her property, comprised the whole of her acquaintance with him for a year. During that time, she had reluctantly parted with Nora, who, although not young, was still good looking, and who had captivated the heart of a widower, who, having long observed her devotion to Captain Lyle's daughter, began to think that she might be a good mother to his own two neglected girls, and also to the youngest, a fine, intelligent boy. To attend to the very liberal outfit which she chose to bestow on Nora, occupied a tolerable share of Miss Lyle's time for several weeks before the wedding; but when this was over, the young heiress sunk into a state of listless and spiritless inactivity.

The humdrum preciseness of Miss Peterson's house, the stereotyped days and evenings, which had no variation to her, except as they deepened in dullness, the absence of all gaiety in the few boarders who could afford living at so expensive a rate, had few attractions for one of her age, and especially of one who had so longed for association with younger and gayer friends.

By Captain Lyle's express desire, Rosabella's education was conducted almost entirely by masters at home. She had therefore had no opportunity to cultivate those acquaintances that school-girls so delight in. She had no correspondents, and it must be owned that she led altogether an aimless, if not an indolent life, having no object upon which to expend the priceless treasures of a girl's young and innocent heart, and no prospect in the future but the same dull round. The few opportunities, which fashionable society afforded her, scarcely broke the stagnant calm of her life; and it seemed positively refreshing to her to have the slight change to every-day life, which the departure of the pompous old boarders, and the two youngest Misses Peterson, brought to the genteel but intolerably dull house in Hastings Street.

On the morning above mentioned, she had indulged in the unwonted exercise of an early walk; and feeling refreshed and exhilarated by the air, warm as it was, she extended her walk as far as Nora's new house. Nora was delighted to see her young mistress, and made such a pleasant bustle of welcome about her, and waited upon her so busily, that Miss Lyle could not refuse her invitation to stay a few hours and rest herself.

The little son of Nora's husband, Andrew Dinsmore, a bright, active boy of ten years old, claimed the privilege of bringing Rosabella some fruit from a particular tree at the bottom of the garden; while his mother relieved her visitor from parasol and bonnet, and made her recline on the comfortable sofa in her cool, shaded parlor.

"You have not forgotten how to pet me yet, Nora," said Miss Lyle, who was gratified to find her old servant still fondly attached to her. "You do not know how much I miss you; although I know it is not good for me to be so waited on, as I used to be by you. I tell you what, Nora, I have thought ever so many times, lately, that I should like to be poor, and to work really hard for my living. It seems to me that such people are so much happier than I ever was."

"Don't talk so, Miss Rosabella," said Nora; "you would feel very different, if you were really poor. But no, you were born to be waited upon; and I am sure it would have always been my pleasure, had not—"

"Had not a good husband been in the way. Well, Nora, I do not blame you, for now you have something to love. Those are very pretty children of yours, too, Nora; that little Andrew is a perfect little picture. How I wish I had a brother just like him! You must give him to me, and then I shall have something to do."

Nora's reply was arrested by a scream from the garden, and running out, she found that Andrew had fallen from the tree and was insensible. Nora was one of those people who always grow faint when accidents happen, and she had no power to do anything.

"I will take him up," said Rosabella, bravely, "and the little girls must go for a doctor, for I believe the poor child's leg is broken," as the limb hung down, motionless, from her arms. And the delicate young lady, who, but an hour before, could not have lifted anything weightier than her pet kitten, carried the boy into the house, and laid him upon a low couch in the hall.

The doctor soon arrived, and proved to be no other than Miss Lyle's guardian, Doctor Phillips. He recognized his ward, with a surprised look, but proceeded to set the boy's limb skilfully and tenderly. Andrew bore it like a little hero, holding by Miss Lyle's hand throughout the whole operation.

Rosabella was not one of those delicate young ladies who shriek at a scratched finger; but it required all her firmness to watch the operation, which looked so formidable for a little child to undergo. She did not shrink, however; and when Andrew's limb had been bandaged, and laid in its wooden case, the doctor turned to her and complimented her on her bravery. The young lady blushed, and explained to him that the little fellow had met with his accident while he was trying to serve her, and that it was only fair that she should remain with him while the operation was performed.

Desiring Nora to be very careful of the boy, he turned to Miss Lyle and offered to take her home in his carriage, which was standing at the gate. She declined, on the plea that she would not leave Nora until Mr. Dinsmore should return.

"I will call for you, then, at four o'clock, this afternoon," said he, "as by that time I shall want to see my little patient."

Long and patiently did Rosabella sit by the bedside of the child, watching his short and uneasy slumbers, and bathing, tenderly, his head and face. Each time that he opened his eyes, he bestowed upon her a loving smile, and when the doctor came in the afternoon, he regarded her with a look of pleasure and admiration.

"You must allow me to become acquainted with my ward, Miss Lyle," said he. "Your father was my dear friend, in our boyish days, and I would wish to supply his place to his daughter, as far as my professional life will permit me to do."

From this time, Doctor Phillips and Miss Lyle met often, in little Andrew's room; for Rosabella took great pleasure in visiting the little patient boy, who loved to have her near him. She carried him everything that could please or interest an invalid child—books, paintings and flowers; and it was his chief delight to hear her read and sing.

"I wish that you would marry Miss Lyle," said the boy, one day, to Doctor Phillips, as she brought fresh bandages to the bedside. "I do wish you would marry Miss Lyle, doctor, and let me live with you, and learn to be a doctor!"

The doctor started at the boy's utterance of a thought which had found place in his mind from the day on which he first met her at Mrs. Dinsmore's; but he busied himself more closely about the child, and Rosabella soon made her escape from the room.

When she reached home, she shut herself up in her room, and throwing herself on her bed, she wept such tears as Rosabella Lyle had never wept before. Long and earnestly she talked with her own heart, and the end of it was that she loved—no, she could not admit that—that she liked Doctor Phillips, old as he was, and plain and grave looking as he always appeared to be. There was a fatherly tenderness, in his manner towards her, that had won her at once. She felt that it would be a pleasure and a happiness to her, to be always under the protection of one whom she could reverence as she did him. She felt, too, that if he asked her to become his wife, she should desire no greater happiness than to make his home beautiful.

The boy's words had syllabled the vague thoughts which had been floating in her brain for some days, and which she had strove to banish, as being too idle a dream to indulge in; but it returned and returned again. Would the doctor think, for a moment, of a child like herself? Would he, whose learning and talents might well entitle him to seek for a wife among the proudest and most intellectual women—would he think of her, except as a troublesome legacy from his old friend, which he would be glad to transfer to any man who would please to take the care of her and her riches off his hands? It was with a real pang, that she answered these questions of her own heart in the negative; and she wept still more at the thought of her desolate state, cut off, as she was, from the natural ties of kindred and friends.

Rosabella was not the only one who had recalled, again and again, the boy's artless words. Doctor Phillips started to find the response in his own heart; but he dismissed it as unworthy of the position in which he stood to Miss Lyle. He suppressed a sigh, as he stood before his mirror that day, after dinner, and observed, for the first time that it had occurred to him, that the lines about his mouth were growing deeper, and that his fine brown hair was showing, here and there, a thread of silver.

"She would not marry me," said he, at last, "and I will not frighten away the confidence she seems to repose in me, by asking her to share an old man's home. And yet how happy would I try to make her!"

Doctor Phillips put on his hat, and walked out to see a patient. He did so unwillingly, for he was about to enter a house where a lady, who had laid violent siege to his heart for the last ten years, resided with her brother. He knew that it was she who required his professional services, and, at the same time, was convinced that she had no occasion for them. She had practised the ruse too often, to have it prove successful, and this day he felt unusually vexed.

He entered the room where Agnes Morton lay upon a couch, robed in an elegant dressing-gown, and with the most delicate of lace caps upon her head. The rose-colored window-curtains were arranged so as to throw the faintest tinge upon her cheek, and hide the ravages which time, not sickness, had made in a once pretty face. She extended a small white hand to the doctor, as he entered, and began to relate how much she had suffered before she could make up her mind to send for him. He listened with grave composure, and wrote a prescription in silence, and wondered to himself if she would take the bitter potion he had written for.

"By the way, doctor," said she, languidly, "is it true that you are guardian to that affected little Miss Lyle? Really, that girl makes me sick. I trust you will endeavor to make her walk and dress more like others. And then I think she goes out too much. I met her every morning, last week, walking, at the lower part of the city, alone."

"Indeed," said the doctor, "perhaps the same reason called her there that induced Miss Morton to visit such a locality."

Agnes bit her lip, and saw that the doctor did not like to have his ward's doings commented upon; so she artfully turned the subject, and he did not tell her that Miss Lyle had gone, in her plain morning dress, every morning, to visit a sick child.

"Who knows," said he to himself, "that I might not have liked Agnes Morton, had I ever chanced to see her when she was thinking of any one but her own pretty self?"

He took his leave, without even a slight pressure of the pretty hand that was extended to him; and as he contrasted her arts to win him with the childlike simplicity of Rosabella Lyle, he reverted again to the words that had dropped from little Andrew, and sighed to think how little probable was their fulfilment.

On his own doorstep, he met the postman. "A letter from the agent of her property at Chili," said he, as he ran his eye over the various packets which the man brought him. He opened it first, and read that in consequence of the villany of a sub-agent, who had been trusted with Miss Lyle's property, during the illness of the principal, her fortune was entirely swept away. A murmur, that sounded more like a thanksgiving than an imprecation, burst from Doctor Phillips, as he read this letter.

"One objection to my proposing, then, is removed," said he, "for now, no one can accuse me of marrying my ward from interested motives; and he actually chuckled to himself, this grave, steady old physician, who had stood, half an hour before, by the couch of poor Miss Agnes Morton, cold and unmoved. "And yet," thought the doctor, "how can I bear to tell this poor child that she is poor, and must be dependent, unless she will become my wife. O, how gladly would I screen her from this knowledge!"

He called on Rosabella that same evening, and found himself more narrowly watching her than ever before. All about her—her room, her dress, the absence of all ornaments on her person, her manners, so different to the affectation which Miss Morton had charged upon her, all impressed him with her perfect simplicity and grace. She was becoming used to his society, now, and she could converse easily and fluently in his presence. Unconsciously, she adopted his opinions, read the books of which he spoke favorably, and, in reality, was coming more and more into his sphere every day. He, too, was bending somewhat from that grave and almost stern deportment which had characterized him, but still preserving the dignity which was so natural to him.

When he parted from her, on that evening, he felt that he must soon know whether she would become the angel of his household or not, and he resolved not to delay his proposal another day; although he dreaded that she would refuse him.

He saw a letter on his table, when he entered his room, and opening it, he read:

"Why is it that you treat me so scornfully? I am ill, and you have no sympathy with my shattered nerves. Have you forgotten the time when you professed to love me? Is that time gone by, and must I always suffer for the foolish coquetry which made me *seem* to prefer another to you? Believe me, when I say that my heart has always been yours, and yours only.

"AGNES MORTON."

It was true that, years ago, Herbert Phillips had admired Agnes Morton; but her heartless manner towards himself, and her ill treatment of a college friend, who had also worshipped at her shrine, and had, in turn, endured the mortification of a rejection for a richer suitor, had inclined a feeling of positive dislike to her; and it was with a feeling of contempt that he looked upon her attempts to win him now.

He tore the paper into strips, and threw it into the fire. Her image was distasteful to him, after his experience of that evening with Rosabella Lyle. He resolved not to answer her note, until his fate should be sealed; although he still delayed to take a step which might destroy, forever, the pleasant intercourse which had latterly sprung up between himself and his ward.

But when the morrow came, he decided to see her at once, and know his fate, whatever it might be. It cannot be denied that Doctor Phillips was more anxious about his dress and appearance that morning, than usual. He was always neat, and even elegant; and might easily have passed for thirty-five, although really past forty; but a shade of anxiety, that rested on his countenance, gave him a care-worn and elderly look, which all his pains-taking could not conceal. On that morning, he looked positively old.

Miss Lyle sat, listlessly, at the window of her own private parlor. She seldom visited any other part of the house, for, amiable and kind as she really was, she could not affect an interest in the dull household which had been her home so long. Her cheeks glowed with evident pleasure, when she saw him enter, and soon they were engaged in animated conversation. An hour passed quickly away, and before it had elapsed, Doctor Phillips was accepted.

"I am not rich, Miss Lyle," he said, after a pause; "but for myself, I do not think it indispensable to happiness. My profession affords me the means of living, and I have little taste for luxuries."

"But you know well enough, dear Guardy," she replied, "that my own means are almost unlimited. At least, you have told me so; and I trust you mean to use my property as your own."

Then it was, that he related to her the loss of that fortune which he told her had always been the stumbling-block in the way of his proposing to her to marry him. He was too proud, he said, to have the world think that he wanted to marry her from interested motives.

Rosabella gave a sigh to the lost fortune which she had been inwardly bestowing upon him, but she only said that he was very unwise to take her now that she was poor.

That evening, the doctor sent the following note to Agnes Morton:

"The time you speak of *has* gone by, never to return. That you may think no more of me, I write to say that I am engaged to the affected little Miss Lyle,' whom you meet so often, when she goes on errands of mercy to the beds-sides of the sick and suffering.

"H. PHILLIPS."

Little Andrew Dinsmore was delighted at the news that his best friends were to be married. He was now quite recovered, and his new mother could leave him to help Rosabella, whose arrangements, however, were of the simplest kind.

The doctor had purchased a house in a good situation, where he could have his office connected with it. He furnished it plainly, but handsomely; and the day on which he exchanged the now useless title of guardian for that of husband, he adopted Andrew Dinsmore as his son.

"The boy must have his whole wish, Rosabella. It was he who planned our marriage, and he was to live with us, *and be a doctor*."

Rosabella joyfully agreed, for she had become much attached to Andrew during his illness, and she now felt that she could do more and better for the improvement of the talents which he really possessed, than those of his own family could possibly do. She found, too, that she had heart enough to divide among many objects, now that she had something to love. She often contrasted her present active and useful life, in which the weeks seemed too short for all she wished to accomplish, with the listless hours which she spent in Miss Peterson's grand, dull house. Her busy hands were everywhere performing miracles of work, and her step was light and springing. "The angel of the household" had really come to the heart and the home of Doctor Phillips, and peace and happiness followed its footsteps.

One morning, she saw her husband hurrying back to the house, after he had left it for his usual round of visits. She met him at the door, as he came up the steps, with a smile of pleasure on his features.

"I do not know as it will do for me to approach so grand a lady," said he, playfully, as he led her into the room, and showed her a letter from the South American agent, in which he stated that a large part of Miss Lyle's property had been recovered from the person who had disappeared with it, and was now in his hands, waiting Miss Lyle's disposal.

"Now we can send Andrew to Paris, to complete his education," said Rosabella; "how fortunate!"

"That is so like my little wife!" said the doctor; "always thinking of others. It is her weakness."

That the doctor shared in this weakness of his wife's, may be inferred from the fact of his selecting three orphan boys, and paying for their education at the best schools in the country, while Andrew Dinsmore is on his way to Paris.

The last time that I saw Rosabella, she looked positively beautiful, dressed in her simple white gown. Herbert, the younger, was playing with her brown curls, and the doctor stood, lingeringly, at the door, as if unwilling to lose sight of so sweet a picture.

A HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY.

A young Hungarian soldier, named Wessely, belonging to an Austrian regiment in the garrison of Rastadt, was executed, a short time ago, in that town, for murder, in virtue of the sentence of a court-martial. Wessely, who was a young man of excellent character, conceived a violent passion for a young woman named Manckart, a countrywoman of his own, who was servant in a public-house at Rastadt, and he paid his addresses to her. She pretended to be in love with him, promised to marry him, and made him give her all the money he received from his family, or was able to earn by his skill as a farrier. All at once, to his dismay, he learned that she had long been engaged to be married to a man in Hungary; and when he called on her for an explanation, she admitted that she meant to marry that man and no other, and that she only pretended to be in love with him in order to get his money to be able to marry sooner. On this, Wessely, in despair, plunged a knife into her heart, and killed her instantaneously. He was sentenced, for this crime, to be hanged, but no hangman could be found for miles around, and so he was ordered to be shot. He was marched to the glacis of the forts under a strong guard, and there found about 2500 soldiers drawn up. He calmly took off his coat and bandaged his eyes himself, and then knelt down. The soldiers, as is usual in Germany on such occasions, knelt also, and three riflemen, who had recently carried off prizes for their skill in shooting, were ordered forward. All the soldiers then began singing a hymn, and, in the midst of it, the signal to fire was given; at the same moment the criminal, struck by three balls, fell dead.—*Galignani's Messenger.*

A REMARKABLE EXECUTIONER.

We have observed several wonderful stories, of late, respecting the skill of the Chinese executioners, who, it is said, can strike off the heads of their victims so skilfully, that the *poor* fellows themselves never discover their loss until a moment or two after they are dead. We recall to mind, however, the story of a German executioner, who far surpassed the Chinese in professional dexterity. Upon one occasion, it happened that a criminal who was condemned to death had a singular itching to play at ninepins; and he implored permission to play once more at his favorite game before he died. Them, he said, he would submit to his fate without a murmur. The judge, thinking there could be no harm in humoring him, granted it as the last prayer; and upon arriving at the place of execution, he found everything prepared for the game—the pins being set up and the bowls being all ready. He commenced his favorite sport with enthusiasm. After a while, the sheriff, observing that he showed no incination to desist, made a sign to the executioner to strike the fatal blow while he stooped for a bowl. The executioner did so, but with such exquisite dexterity that the culprit did not notice it or feel it. He thought, indeed, that a cold breath of air was blowing upon his neck, and drawing himself back with a shrug, his head dropped forward into his hands. He naturally supposed that it was a cowl which he had grasped, and seizing it firmly, rolled it at the pins. All of them fell; and the head was heard to exclaim, as it rebounded from the further wall: "Hurrah, I've won the game!"—*Portfolio.*

A DISCOVERY.

At the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, an old lady residing upon a farm, which would now embrace the central portion of New York city, returned to her native town in Holland, and died shortly after. Her son and daughter in this country sought everywhere for the deeds to the farm and other property, but they could not be found, and amid the disorders of the times, the family was deprived of the estates and scattered in different directions. Recently, an old lady living near Oswego, a descendant of the one above mentioned, tore a large square piece of tin from the bottom of a drawer belonging to an ancient family chest. Beneath the tin, she discovered, much to her surprise, some title deeds conferring upon the heirs a claim to some valuable property in New York city, and to fifty thousand acres of land in New Jersey, leased to different individuals in small farms for a term of ninety-nine years, which leases are now about to expire. The necessary steps for recovering all these lands will be immediately taken.—*Newark Advertiser.*

RUSSIAN OPERA.

A correspondent of the Paris Musical Gazette says a national Russian opera is about to be established at St. Petersburg. The Russians, it is known, have a remarkable talent for music, and their music, though peculiar, is pleasing. Some years since, many unavailing attempts were made by the government to revive the popularity of Russian music. At length, a number of young men, who appeared to possess musical talent, were sent to Italy to study. Having completed their education, they have returned home, and the opera is to be commenced with their aid. One of them, named Letoff, is said to be a remarkably fine tenor singer, and has been engaged at a yearly salary of about four thousand dollars—an enormous salary for a Russian. A Russian prima donna, of whom great things are predicted, is also to appear, and the delight of the Russians at thinking that they are at last about to have a musical theatre of their own which will shine with eclat in the eyes of the west, is said to be unbounded.

[Written for the Flag of our Union]

BORN AND BURIED IN A WEEK.

BY FREDERIC WRIGHT.

Bright rose the sun above the woods,
And balmy was the dewy air,
A golden sheen lay on the floods,
While summer decked the meadows fair;
A thousand songs were heard afar,
Upon the gentle zephyrs borne—
As daylight veiled the silver star
That ushered in thy natal morn.

O, 'twas an hour of joyful pride,
An hour with sweet fruition blest,
When, casting doubt and fear aside,
Thy mother clasped thee to her breast.
Others had lain and nestled there.
But, all save one, had passed away;
Hope whispered in affection's ear,
"This last and fairest sure will stay."

As eastern magi came of old,
Led by the star, mysterious, mild,
To Bethlehem's consecrated fold,
Where lay the blest and holy Child,
And offerings brought of incense sweet,
With treasures costly, rich and rare,
And bowed them at the Infant's feet,
In humble adoration there!

So freshly from the wilding grove,
From garden fair and dewy field—
As if inspired by human love,
Or human sympathy revealed,
There came a gentle visitor—
The smallest of the feathered race—
And resting for a moment there,
Gazed lovingly upon thy face!

In silent wonderment it paid
Mute homage at thy cradle-bed,
And then, to rock its native shade,
Once more its golden pinions spread.
I love to think with fancy's mood,
'Twas but an angel's fond disguise,
That came to cheer thy solitude,
Or tidings bring from Paradise!

But, who comes now, with cautious step,
On tip-toe light, and curious eye,
With finger on the budding lip,
And little bosom swelling high?
There's expectation in that look,
And rapture thrills through every vein,
By stealth she has her couch forsook,
To see "the baby" once again!

Close by the shaded couch she stands,
And looks upon the sleeper there,
And fain would clasp those tiny hands,
Or feel but once that silken hair;
Now, fearful of surprise, she starts
To snatch a fond and hasty kiss—
Then with a hurried tread departs,
Rejoicing in her stolen bliss!

Ah, sister dear, in that adieu,
So kindly meant, so warmly given,
Thy childish bosom little knew
There lay the passport key to heaven!
Contagion from thy lip hath sped
With lightning flash through every vein;
And now our babe of love is dead—
That kiss hath rent the golden chain!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A NEW YEAR'S STORY OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY RICHARD CRANSHAW.

Now, while the blinding snow is falling upon roof-top and upon the ice-covered ground—falling pitilessly upon the winter-touched trees, whose ill-clad limbs, and dismal shivering moanings, as the wintry blast wraps itself grimly around them, are so like the miseries of the houseless and the poor—now, while the keen wind gathers in its might, and dashes forward to meet the great snow-army as it descends, scattering it and dashing it headlong hither and thither, and then, with a shrill goblin scream of triumph, whirling itself back again ere making a new foray—now, while the curtains are drawn close, and the red hearthside sheds its pleasant glow around—while there is cold without and comfort within, you shall hear my story of a hundred years ago.

Just such a night as this. The wind was playing the same antics, and the eddying snow was, as it is to night, lying on the bosom of the earth—the self-same white counterpane. Upon the doorstep of an old-fashioned, comfortable-looking house sat, or rather cowered, a little shivering figure—that of a boy perhaps eight years old. How long he would have sat there alive on such a night as that, you may easily conjecture; but just as the poor little head was sinking upon his bosom, and the small limbs were stiffening out for their last repose, the door opened and out blustered the owner of the mansion.

"Now, Jane, remember. I shall be back in two hours at the farthest, and if you neglect the study-fire, or go to sleep, and keep me waiting at the door for longer than five seconds, I shall discharge you on the spot and send you packing about your business, late as it is."

And with this fierce bluster, the door was closed. But don't believe a word he said! He'd as soon have thought of turning Jane out of doors as he would of flying over the moon on a broom-handle. And Jane knew it; she knew the old colonel must have his joke, and she knew that he would chuckle within his fur muffler, as he strode along with huge glee, and that he would chuckle finally to such an extent, that it would end in a fit of coughing that would nearly choke him, and thus put a stop to it, at all events for the time.

But the colonel was not to enjoy his joke this time; for just as he reached the lower step, he narrowly missed going headlong over the little prostrate figure. The army in Flanders not being the only one that swore fearfully, it is not surprising that something very like an oath was rapped out by the astonished colonel.

"You young scound— eh! why, what's this? Here, you Jane! Jane, I say! open the door, will you!" And as the door was re opened, that female was in her turn astonished to see the colonel bearing, in his great broad arms, what seemed the emaciated body of a half naked child. Perhaps her surprise had an effect upon her movements; for the excited warrior demanded, in thundering tones, whether she had turned into wood, and he hanged to her! or whether she had the slightest intention of assisting her master in his efforts to restore animation to the senseless form now laid before the study-fire. Thus adjured, she became flesh once more, and ably seconded the colonel in chafing the frozen limbs, and administering drops of a warm cordial to the lips of their mutual patient.

And so was little Willie Merwin saved from being frozen to death on just such a night as this, one hundred years ago. His life's story was a short one; no romance about it. His father and mother both dead, himself left to the care of the woman in whose house they had lived, who had that night got more than usually drunk, and had for some childish mischief been driven him out of doors, in a fit of gin or rumbottle passion—for they indulged in those execitable fluids, and acted under their influence a hundred years ago, very much after the fashion of the present improved age. And so it was that, as the child finished his artless story of misery and poverty, and hunger and cold and nakedness, the blustering colonel formed a resolution in his mind, which resolution I may just as well tell now, as make a vast and profound secret of it, and thus distract the attention of the ladies who are listening to me, and whose minds will be in too turbulent a state to give their ears undividedly to the rest of my narration.

The colonel's resolution then was—to adopt the little houseless wanderer; inform the inquisitive world that he was a ward of his, left in his care by a deceased and distant relative; change his name from Willie Merwin to his own of Mannering, thus making it William Mannering; and finally, when it should please fate to gather him to his fathers, as he had neither chick nor child, to see him well married, and bestow the goods of this world upon him that might be in his possession, and die contentedly in the arms of the golden headed boy, by his kind heart saved this night from a miserable death or a still more miserable life of poverty.

And so did the colonel build these airy castles, as he sat by the study-fire, while the couch opposite him was tenanted by the object of his thoughts, and while the child gazed with a dreamy eye upon the painted ceiling, and upon the handsome book-case and the golden framed pictures, which adorned the walls, and finally rested upon the florid face and kindly eye of the colonel as it met his own.

And while the colonel, like some magician of old, waved his wand and the golden palaces sprang up from airy nothingness, and then with another wave were tenanted with bright and happy forms and faces, and while the old clock in the corner droned lazily forth its seconds, and while the cheerful blaze of the fire sobered down into red coals, and kaleidoscope-like, formed all sorts of quaint pictures, the child gazed and winked first at the one and then at the other, until, by some necromantic process which excited feeble, sleepy wonder, they all began to dissolve into one another, and the colonel's face winked and blinked from the grate, while the red coals were certainly walking sofily up and down the room on top of the colonel's broad shoulders. Next, the clock had seated itself in the colonel's chair and was pulling off its boots, while at the same time emitting clouds of smoke from a short nece-rhaum held firmly in one of the holes on its face by which it was every eight days wound up. Next, it took from a drawer a white nightcap and placed it jauntily on its head; and next, the child fell asleep before he could make up his mind whether to laugh at its grotesque appearance, or be frightened at such uncommon behaviour.

Nine new years' days have been added to the new year I've just told you of. Ten years have passed away. They have placed here and there a silvery thread among the raven hair of the colonel. They have added much to the circumference of the motherly Jane. They have shot Willie Mannering up into a tall, well-formed youth; turned the golden hair of his young days into a glossy brown; and while they have brought to view the first shoots of an incipient moustache, have given him now the title of *Mr.* William Mannering. And O, what a world of youthful pleasures and of youthful gratifications have they opened out before him! And with what delightful anticipations does he gird up his loins for the ease of manhood which is now set before him! He has just bidden farewell to the scholastic institution, whence he has issued arrayed in the panoply of learning and knowledge with which he is now to do battle with the world.

Behold him, then, seated on the roof of the stage-coach which is bearing him to the home of his childhood, and the abode of his benefactor. It is morning. The fields and cottages and barns and hill-tops are all decked out in their mantle of white, and the beams of the morning sun are reflected with dazzling brilliancy from every object on which they shine, save those that fallen. Perhaps *you'd* prefer to sit inside; *he* wouldn't. He'd no more sit inside of a close stage-coach, on such a morning as that, than the lark would prefer to grub upon the ground, worm-like, rather than skim the blue ether, and, lighting on some friendly bough, carol forth his song of happiness to the golden god of day. *He* sit inside, and miss the pure breath of the morning, as it floated to his lips and gave him its kiss of early greeting! *He* sit inside, and lose the glorious prospect unfolded before him! *He* sit inside, and be deaf to the cheering whistle of the farmer, as he plodded through the snow and gave "a happy new year" to them, as they passed him like the wind! *He* sit inside to be stifled, or to listen to the music of his sleeping fellow-passengers, all huddled and muffled up like so many hedgehogs? No, sir! no, madam! the outside for him!

And so, finally, he reaches home, and there are great rejoicings and great welcomings and much shaking of hands and many embracings, to greet his return. Jane, as she released him for the sixth time from her maternal embrace, to hold him off at arm's length and gaze delightedly upon him, for the sake of his companions, with "how he has grown, to be sure!" as though rather surprised that so astonishing a fact should have taken place at all, since she gave him her last kiss, when bidding him farewell so many months ago, on his last return to school.

"To be sure he has grown," said the colonel, "and growing boys are always hungry; while here you are keeping him without his breakfast, and I've no doubt in a state of absolute starvation, you unnatural female!" And as the colonel shakes his adopted boy by the hand again, it is plainly perceptible that all this outburst has been for no earthly purpose but to give vent to the huskiness in his throat, and that the allusion to the smoking of the chimney he makes immediately after, is a mere pretence to account for the mistiness which is rising upon his sight, for the chimney is as well-behaved a chimney as ever drew a breath of smoke.

So after these ten long years have passed away, they are again seated by the self-same fireside; and the self-same old eight day clock drones out its seconds just as it did upon that night; and the book-case occupies its old place in the corner; and the picture-frames are unchanged, save that there is one more added, and that one of a youth bearing a strong resemblance to the youth now seated before the fire. And so they talk over the future, the old colonel, for he is growing old now, entering gleefully into all the plans formed by his young companion, and enjoying the prospect just as much as though he were the party interested and not his boy.

The next day is New Year's day, and when night comes, there is a great party assembled in the mansion of Colonel Mannering, to celebrate the return of his adopted son. But it is not an assemblage of old people, or even of middle-aged people. No, no; the colonel knows better than that! He recollects how *he* felt when he was a boy, and so the cheerful old rooms resound with the merry laughter of youthful voices; and the old fashioned mirrors reflect none but youthful faces; and youthful feet press the soft carpets; and youth for that night, at all events, holds undisputed and unquestioned sway. And the old colonel gazes around among them all, and sees boys, like his, with glossy brown hair, and others with curls of jetty hue; and tall slender forms, and handsome young faces. But his eye lights on none with the admiration and the love that he bears for that one young figure, at this moment standing by the side of pretty Lucy Hayland. And as his eye looks upon them, perhaps he thinks of the future; and perhaps he settles, in his own mind, that they would make as handsome and well-matched a pair as his old eyes would desire to look upon, some years hence; and perhaps he is somewhat seconded in his thoughts by Master Willie himself—who knows? One thing is certain—that young gentleman bestowed more attentions upon the aforesaid Lucy than he did upon any other of the many young ladies who thronged those old rooms upon that New Year's night.

Ten years more have passed away into the dim remembrance of the echoless past. What pictures do they show? There is the old mansion as it was when last it echoed to the sound of young voices, and the tread of merry young feet. There is the old clock in the study-corner, droning, as it did of yore, the seconds as they take their flight forever. There is the book-case—the golden-framed pictures, that of Willie among them, lit up with the red glow of the fire-light, and seeming, in the flashes breaking out from it now and anon, to have life and expression, and to be almost on the point of speaking out from its burnished frame. There, too, is the old colonel, now looking old indeed—O, very old! Not *one* silver thread here and there among the raven mass, but all silver now. Lines of care—of grief—of sorrow, too, are there, and the strong man's head is bent forward, as though heavy thoughts were often busy there, and could not be shaken of. And the heavy thoughts are these: That the light of his old days, and he who was once the only pride of the old man's heart, has gone from him forever! Yes, Willie has left him. We'll not blame him too soon. We'll patiently hear why he has done so, and then we'll say guilty or not guilty.

The clarion call of "Liberty" has sounded through the great length and breadth of the land. The hour has come when the strong tyrant Oppression has gathered him in his might, and stands with arm upraised to crush the young but stalwort Right, and place his foot upon his prostrate neck. And now we know where Willie has gone. He has gone to aid with his feeble power the cause of the Right against the Mighty—to help to swell the little band who have devoted themselves, "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honors" to the cause of their country, their altars and their God! Gone—though against his adopted father's will, against his wishes, against finally his commands; for the colonel, bred from his youth up to respect and venerate the power beneath whose sway he first drew breath, and for whose fame he had so often fought and bled, saw not with the eyes of, as he considered him, his misthinking and wrongdoing boy. And so it had ended in passionate appeals and then fierce invectives on the one side, and respectful firmness and sorrowful departure on the other. And now do we know why the colonel upon that night was sitting all alone, and why the silver threads had displaced the raven masses, and why the lines of care and thought and sorrow were there upon the old man's face!

He had sat there some hour or two, his thoughts wandering sadly to and fro, but all centering towards the one object—that picture just above the mantel piece and ruddy with the fire's red glow. And as he gazed upon it, it looked with a sad, reproachful gaze upon him, and a tear seemed gathering in its eye, or it might possibly have been an unbidden moisture in his own. He stooped to dash it away, and looked again but to behold that the picture was gone! Gone! and a mist had lowered where once the painted canvass stood, which, as he gazed in wonder, slowly took form and finally resolved itself into a picture that was not there before, and which was instinct with life.

He saw a splendid hall, furnished with all that costly luxury could suggest. He saw princes and nobles and lords and ladies. And there seemed to be high revel held there, and the red wine flowed like water, and the lavish riot and waste that took place within that noble hall, were almost fearful to behold. Here and there, vast heaps of gold lay upon marble tables, and the changing dice, as they fell clanging upon the tables, were watched with an eagerness that in the red glow of the fire-light seemed almost fiendlike. And he shuddered as he recognized many of the forms and faces there, and felt a chill at his heart as he acknowledged the truth of the picture of loyal depravity.

In silence did the mist descend upon it, and when he raised his eyes, another was presented to his view—that of an humble cottage; an old man with hair whiter than his own; an old woman; a mother, and her infant child. And the old man was offering up a prayer for the safe return of his only son, and the success of the holy cause in which he was banded heart and soul. And as he prayed, the door was burst rudely in and a ruffian gang of soldiers, hired to kill, though not such as these, and in cold blood, too, dashed in. And as he gazed, horror-struck, and saw the old man brutally murdered, the young child hurled from the window, and soon after the cottage fired, with fiendish yells, amid the screams of women and the execrations of the soldiers, his heart grew sick within him as he felt in his inmost soul that such things were, and had been.

Another picture was before him. A horrible dungeon in which human beings were packed in, as it might be they would pen animals in for the slaughter. Young and old were there—the stripling—the man in prime of life—and the gray headed. Groans and shrieks and prayers for death to come quickly and give release, resounded through the black and dismal vault. And as the provost goes his rounds among them with a dim lantern, giving a kick here and there, to see whether it be a dead or live man stretched out so most onless, he sees, to his horror, the well known features of his own boy—his Willie! Can it be Willie? so changed—with eyes fixed and glaring—scarce any covering to hide the gaunt bones almost starting from the skin! Can *this* be Willie? Ah, yes! the eye of love recognizes it, though it has almost lost all traces of its identity, though the soft brown locks are naught now but a hideous tangled mass, and though the full brown eye now fixed in the stolid glare of madness.

To start from the chair on which he has reclined; to see that the picture is as it was, the semblance of his so loved boy, and to know that it is all a dream! But here he stays not. 'Tis but a mere step to the hideous jail where the warprisoners are confined, and as fast as horses can be driven they are driven there. The rest is soon told. Tenderly as on that night, twenty years back, he had rested that little head upon his kindly heart, does he now bear it there again. Tenderly as a mother guards her infant, does the old man, night and day, hold sleepless watch over his forgiven boy. There is another there, too, who seems to claim some right to watch and minister. Surely it is the same form by whose side Willie Mannering was so often seen on the night of that New Year's party, ten years ago.

* * * * * * *

There is another grand party in the old fashioned mansion of Colonel Mannering; and it is also a New Year's party. But strong symptoms of a wedding-party, too, are visible to the beholder. Just so; for on this night William Mannering and Lucy Hayland are made one, and take the vows of undying love, and tender protection on one side, and of love, honor and obedience on the other, "forever and ever, until death do them part, so help them God."

JOKING WITH A BARBER.

Stopping for a day or two at a village a short way from Boston, Jeems went to a barber's to get shaved. On entering, and casting his eye about the room, he perceived that the barber drove a thriving trade of tonsor and small grocer.

"Shave, sir?" said the barber to his customer, whose face sufficiently indicated the object of his visit.

Jeems made no reply, but drawing himself up to a lofty height, proceeded, in the attorney fashion, to interrogate the barber as follows:

"Sir, you are a barber?"

"Yes sir; have a shave?"

"And do you also keep this oyster cellar?"

"Yes, sir; have any oysters?"

"Well, sir, the impertinence of yours gives rise to the most horrible suspicions. It is a serious thing to submit one's head to the manipulations of a stranger, but if you can answer a couple of questions to my satisfaction I should like to be shaved."

The barber said he would try.

"Well, sir," said Jeems solemnly, "do you shave with your oyster-knife?"

"No, sir," said the barber, smiling.

"One qu stion more," continued the interrogator, "and remember that you are under an oath, or rather, recollect that this is a serious business (the barber started) one question more; do you never open oysters with your razor?"

"No, sir!" exclaimed the barber, indignantly, amid a roar of laughter from the bystanders.

"Then shave me," said Jeems, throwing himself into the chair, and untying his neck-cloth with the air of a man who has unshaken confidence in human nature.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

THE BUTTER TREE.

On the banks of the Niger, in Africa, they have a tree which the Negroes enjoy greatly, as the fruit it obtains'd. The tree is like our oak, and the fruit somewhat resembles the Spanish olive. The kernel of the fruit is dried in the sun and then boiled, and the butter thus obtained is white, firmer, and of a richer flavor than that obtained from a cow, besides keeping sweet a year without salt. The growth and preparation of this article is one of the leading objects of African industry, and constitutes the main article of their inland commerce. If present prices continue, we suggest that our dealers import a supply of the vegetable butter of Africa. Or may be the tree can be acclimated, and every man have a butter-tree in his yard.—*African Researches.*

MISERABLE PEOPLE.

Young ladies with new bonnets on rainy days.

A smoking nephew on a visit to an anti-smoking aunt.

A young doctor who has just cured his first patient and has no prospect of any other.

A star actress with her name in small letters on the bills.

A witness in a bribery case.

And a city sportsman at the end of a day's chase.—*London Punch.*

A RARE CHANCE!

WHO WILL WIN THESE PRIZES?

Being resolved to keep THE FLAG OF OUR UNION where it has ever been for the last ten years, in the van of literary weekly newspapers, not only to point of circulation, but in real intrinsic excellence, the proprietor has resolved to offer the following inducement to post-masters, and other energetic individuals, of either sex, to send us clubs for the year commencing January, 1856.

TEN ELEGANT AND RICH PRIZES

are offered in good faith, and shall be awarded with strict honesty and impartiality. The intrinsic value of these prizes is over $

Eight Hundred and Fifty Dollars,

so arranged as to be divided among the persons who shall forward to us the ten largest clubs for THE FLAG OF OUR UNION between the 1st of December, 1855 and the 1st day of February, 1856, being a period of about sixty days. The field is open to all, the prizes are cogent and attractive.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

IS AN ELEGANT, MORAL AND REFINED

Miscellaneous Family Journal.

It is now the most popular literary weekly paper in America, a reputation which it has enjoyed for ten years circulating at the present time more than any other miscellaneous weekly journal in the country, with the exception of *Bailou's Pictorial*.

It is devoted to polite literature, and it embraces

NEWS, TALES, POEMS, SKETCHES, MISCELLANY, ADVENTURES, BIOGRAPHIES, WIT AND HUMOR, AND NOVELLETTES,

written expressly for the paper by the best and most popular writers of the country. It is also spiced with a record of the notable events of the times, of peace and war, of discoveries and improvements occurring in either hemisphere, forming an intelligent and instructive compendium. In politics, and on all sectarian questions, it is strictly neutral; therefore making it emphatically

A PAPER FOR THE MILLION,

and a welcome visitor to the home circle. It contains the foreign and domestic news of the day, so condensed as to present the greatest possible amount of intelligence. No advertisements are admitted to the paper, thus offering the entire sheet, which is of

THE MAMMOTH SIZE,

for the instruction and amusement of the general reader. An unrivalled corps of contributors are regularly engaged, and every department is under the most finished and perfect system that experience can suggest, forming an

ORIGINAL PAPER.

The FLAG is printed on fine white paper, with new, clear and beautiful type and contains 1280 square inches, being a large weekly paper of double super-royal quarto pages.

We have commenced the new volume of The Flag of our Union (Volume XI.) with a brilliant and admirably written original novelette by that young and popular author, HORACE B STANSFIELD. Mr. Stanfield has just returned, after five years residence in the Orient, and this exceedingly interesting story is the result of his experience in the land of the Caliphs. It is entitled:

BEN HAMED:
—OR,—
THE CHILDREN OF FATE.
A TALE OF THE EASTERN WORLD.

We predict for this story the most favorable reception yet accorded to the numerous list of original novelettes which we are constantly publishing in the Flag. With all the dreamy mystery of the East it has also the exciting plot, and strong delineations of love and passion, that remarkable fatality produces in every clime. We shall introduce in the coming volume of our paper the productions of many new and sterling writers, and make such improvements otherwise as shall enhance the value of this widely circulated and favorite weekly.

THE PRIZES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

To the person who shall send us the *first* largest club, we will present a beautiful new SILVER TEA SET. Tea urn, cream pitcher, sugar bowl, slop dish and silver salver, being five pieces of sterling silver, manufactured for us by *Jones, Shreve & Brown*, Boston. Value..... $250

To the person who sends us the second largest club, we will present a large, fine BOSTON ROAST MELODEON, elegantly cased and suitable for a church or parlor ornament, warranted perfect in all respects. Value..... 175

To the person who shall send us the *third* largest club, we will present an elegant English GOLD LEVER WATCH, chronometer and compensation balance and extra jewel new and warranted a perfect watch in all respects, and of the best workmanship. Value..... 120

To the person who shall send us the *fourth* largest club, we will present a superb English SILVER LEVER WATCH, same movement as above, new, heavy cased, and perfect in all respects, and warranted as to time and workmanship. Value..... 90

To the person who shall send us the *fifth* largest club, we will present a valuable library of FORTY BOUND VOLUMES, all new and standard works, embracing biographies, histories, travels, etc., such as should circumscribe any home circle. Value..... 75

To the person who shall send us the *sixth* largest club, we will present an elegant, brass-bound, portable black walnut WRITING DESK, of the most exquisite workmanship, manufactured to our own order, with secret drawers etc., by G. S. Tolman, 113 Washington Street, Boston, and furnished with every usual article. Value..... 50

To the person who shall send us the *seventh* largest club, we will present an elegantly wrought SILK PURSE, suitable for either gentleman or lady, and containing IN GOLD DOLLARS, twenty-five dollars. Value..... 30

To the person who shall send us the *eighth* largest club, we will present a SILVER HUNTING WATCH, a new and perfect time-keeper, and in all respects suitable for a young lad or miss attending school. Warranted. Value..... 25

To the person who sends us the *ninth* largest club, we will present four elegant large STEEL ENGRAVINGS, framed in gilt, representing the seasons, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, elegant parlor ornaments. Value..... 20

To the person who sends us the *tenth* largest club, we will present a FINE GOLD PENCIL CASE AND PEN HOLDER, with gold pen, of a new pattern and exceedingly beautiful and useful pocket companion. Value..... 15

Every prize is new and perfect in all respects, and may be seen at any hour by calling at our publication office.

TERMS—INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

1 subscriber, one year..... $2 00
4 subscribers, " " 7 00
10 " " " 15 00

Any person sending us *sixteen* subscribers, at the last rate, shall receive the sixteen copy gratis, as well as all are sure of remuneration, who canvass them active.

Any person sending *fifty* subscribers shall receive the eight volume complete of our "Pictorial" elegantly and uniformly bound in full gilt, with illustrated frontispiece and indexes, containing nearly two thousand fine illustrations, the price of which is sixteen dollars.

It is very important that the names accompanied by the money should be sent to us as fast as they are obtained, that we may be able to print an ample number of papers to meet the demand. Therefore as soon as ten subscribers are obtained the person who has procured the club can forward them with the money, and he can then add to the club any number of names at the same rate, and the number will be duly credited to the account of the party who sends the subscribers, until the time specified shall expire that is, up to Feb 1st 1856.

It is not requisite that the entire club should be taken in one town; we will send the papers to any neighboring post-office to that where the club is gotten up, but all subscriptions must come through the same agent in order to be required to his or her credit. The offer does not apply to any regular wholesale agent of our papers. The clubs must be bona fide, and each name to count must be money.

The result will be duly published, and indisputable evidence of the receipt of each prize, by the successful parties, will be given.

Sample copies of the paper furnished gratis.

M. M. BALLOU, *Publisher and Proprietor,*
Corner Tremont & Bradfield Sts., Boston, Mass.

☞ In writing letters please be careful to write name of post-office and State plainly, as possible, so post masters may not confuse them. Also write individuals names distinctly.

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THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

SATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

☞ TERMS of THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, $2.00 per annum, [ever] in advance, being discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. See imprint on last page.

☞ All persons who are subscribers to THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, whether in clubs or otherwise, who will enclose us $2 stating that they are on the subscription list of the Flag, shall receive BALLOU'S PICTORIAL for one year, commencing with the same date their Flag subscription commences.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

Few papers can compare with *The Flag of our Union* as it regards its *originality*, numbering as it does among its contributors a large list of the best names, while its matter is a ways chaste and entertaining.—*Daily Bee, Boston.*

Carefully printed upon fine white paper, and filled with *original* matter from beginning to end, *The Flag of our Union* merits the extraordinary popularity which it has enjoyed for *ten* consecutive years.—*Ladies' Repository.*

Go where you will, from Maine to California, you are sure to see *The Flag of our Union* in nearly every family circle. Mr. Ballou relies on great taste and liberality in the publication of this charming weekly.—*Burlington Sentinel.*

Justly unrivalled in circulation, *The Flag of our Union* presents its immense list of subscribers with choice *original* matter, which they can obtain nowhere else. The best writers are engaged upon the paper.—*Daily Ledger.*

The pioneer among the miscellaneous weekly press, *The Flag of our Union* has also proved the most popular and successful. *After ten years* of profitable existence it is now more pleasing and attractive than ever before.—*Quincy Patriot.*

A charming weekly visitor to the home circle is *The Flag of our Union*; chaste, moral, and exceedingly interesting in each issue, and edited not by a pair of scissors, but by an experienced and careful hand.—*Charleston Mercury.*

OLD AND NEW.

As we voyage adown the stream of time, that flows on eternally towards that vast ocean from which no traveller has returned, there are moments of calm, when our vessel seems to stand still for a moment, and when the older of the passengers look back with fond regret to the scenes they are leaving, and contrast the new prospects on which they are entering with those which they have already proved. The younger passengers are little given to retrospection; with them the future is all in all, and they chide every day which holds them back from those Delectable Mountains, ever looming in the distance in the eye of inexperience, and piled with "cloud-capt towers," and such gorgeous palaces as those which gild the vision of the youth in the first picture of Cole's Voyage of Life.

We are now in one of those moments of calm. We have just doubled a cape, and apparently new scenes lie before us. In other words, we have broken farewell to one year, and are entering on another. For a moment our minds dwell upon the past, and then the present or the future absorbs us, as the Maelstrom of Norway involves every bark whose keel once touches its revolving circles. The facility with which we forget an old year as soon as it has passed away, is anything but creditable to the sentimental part of our nature. The funeral is a merry one—the mourners never think of shedding tears. The requiem quickly runs into a wassail song, the knell into a "triple bob major" of joyous bells peals. It is from mere force of habit that we write once or twice the figures that represent the old year, not from any lingering affection; but we soon shake off even that equivocal sign of respect. Who dates a letter now 1855, even in a thoughtless moment? 1855! we don't know the gentleman.

We, Americans, are eminently gifted with oblivion. We don't like to dwell on by-gones. The present generation abhors things antiquated and out of date. Old houses are no longer looked upon with that degree of respect they ought to command. The quaint old manor-house, with its heavy gables, its low-studded rooms, and its small paned windows, must give way to the modern villa, or chateau, with lofty arches and huge plates of glass, and an air of magnificent gentility. Old trees are grudgingly, here and there, permitted to stand, though the slightest symptom of ailing, a little delay in vegetating in the spring, the smallest shadow of shabby gentility, is an excuse for the axe. They are "put out of their misery," just as old horses are; their claim to existence is hardly recognized. So with old men. The respect for age, the reverence for white hairs, is fast becoming obsolete. In this hurry, and drive, and whirl, and bustle, amid this insane strut of progress, and craving for change and novelty, many good things are condemned in the indiscriminate warfare of the new on the old.

"I sometimes wonder," said one of our finest poets, lately, "that the present generation suffers an old man to live. There is scarcely any conservatism now a days, and there is danger in the fact." At the risk of being branded with the loathsome charge of old fogyism, we will venture to say that we think there is such a thing as progressing a little too fast. Hence, in our voyage of life, we would now and then pause, and see if we derive no lesson from our past experience. In our style of living, we think it would be well to retain some of the republican simplicity of the past. And as to food, the editor of the New England Farmer says truly, in speaking of our ancestors: "Plain meats and vegetables—the turnip instead of the potato—and principally rye and barley bread, made up the sum of their frugal meals; and there was less dyspepsia and despondency in those times than in our more artificial life."

Our predecessors knew nothing of hygienes and gymnastics, and calisthenics, which we do; but they were certainly a hardier race. We should be thrifty, therefore, to peruse their records once in a while, instead of dismissing them to oblivion with the remark, that they were a "parcel of old fogies."

TAXES IN NEW YORK.—The taxes in the Imperial City were $2 50 a head in 1830; they are now nearly ten dollars a head!

TERRIBLE.—The total number of deaths by cholera in Italy, last year, was 150,000.

ANOTHER ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

Dr. Kane's account of his observations in the Arctic regions has produced a deep impression, and notwithstanding a full conception of the inevitable sufferings and perils it must entail, another expedition to the far, far North is seriously talked of. Dr. Kane's discoveries have stimulated curiosity, and excited the spirit of scientific investigation. The exi-tence of a vast open polar sea presents so many problems to be solved, that we cannot wonder at the anxiety manifested to arrive at a solution. The phenomena that other adventurers only glanced at, Dr. Kane scanned with a vigilant eye. "He is not the first," says the New York Herald, "as most people are aware, who has suggested that there existed a tract of open water in the neighborhood of the Pole. The Russians, who, for a century or more, have had a system of Polar explorations on foot, have named the sea Polynia, which means a 'lane,' or interval of water between tracts of ice. Sir Edward Parry, in 1827, stood on the borders of the sea, and noticed with surprise that a strong wind blew no ice towards the shore. Similar observations were made by Phipps and Wrangel. There can, therefore, be no possibility that Dr. Kane has been misled. He has merely seen and noted what had fallen previously on the retina of other's eyes without producing any impression.

"What is the nature of this sea? What its extent? Its temperature? Its office in the economy of the world? To these questions, Dr. Kane, when catechised, could give no satisfactory answer. All that he knows is, that the temperature of the air rose as he approached it, that the water of the sea appeared warmer than that of the arms of the ocean further to the south; and that ducks, and seals, and herbivorous animals appeared plentiful on its surface, and apparently migrated towards it from the neighborhood. These discoveries, slender as they are, tend to overthrow the old theory that the Pole is the centre of atmospherical frigidity; and throw open the door to conjecture as to the nature of the globe's surface around the Pole, and the principle on which cold is distributed throughout the Arctic regions."

It is thought that with proper preparations and precautions, another expedition might be pushed farther to the north without peril of life. Such an expedition would probably unravel the mysteries that shroud the story of the great Polar Sea, and set a vexed question at rest forever. Such a result would crown with fame the daring adventurer who commanded the expedition; and it would be worth a life time for a man to say—

"He was the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea."

For our own part, however, while we understand the enthusiasm the northern adventurers excite, we can hardly bring ourselves to share it.

HOPE DEFERRED.

The heart of Mrs. Gaines—the widow of General Gaines—is one of those brave robust hearts that "hope deferred" does not "make sick." Through every discouragement and loss, from court to court, from year to year, she has battled to secure the legal recognition of the will she alleges to have been made by her father, in 1813, bequeathing to her property worth several millions. If, as we understand it, the recent decision of the Supreme Court of Louisiana be final, Mrs. Gaines is this day one of the richest ladies on this shore of the Atlantic. As she is a very generous woman, she will probably waive her claim to the whole amount, and, after paying costs, be content with a few millions.

ATROCITIES OF A WOMAN.—The tribunal of Potsdam recently pronounced sentence of death on the widow of a surgeon, named Matyger de Kesin. She was found guilty of the following charges: of complicity in poisoning her husband; of complicity in poisoning the female companion of her lover, the barber Kage; of murdering the son of said Kage with a hatchet; of having excited to the murder of the daughter of the said Kage, and also of her own son. The sentence states that her head is to be cut off by the common executioner.

JOHN FROST.—A memorial, on behalf of John Frost, the exile, who is now more than 70 years of age, is being signed in Keighley, praying her majesty to allow him to return to his native country.—*English paper.*

Can this J. Frost be our old friend, Jack Frost? If so, his "native country" is the North Pole, and we sincerely hope her majesty will permit him to return to it.

LITERARY CURIOSITY.—A letter was lately deposited in the New York post office, bearing the following superscription: "For the pasture what preaches in methodist church morton street in care. Of the saxton W. vitchon new York Sitty." It is hoped the schoolmaster will soon return from abroad.

THE PRESENT.—A gentleman—of course an old fogy—writes to the Home Journal, "Large stone, granite and 'brown stone fronts,' dashing wives, fast horses, extravagant furniture, and large debts, mark the degree that is now in New York."

NO DOUBT.—Dr. Hall, in his Journal of Health, expresses the opinion that "prosperity is the best pill for poor health." We have no doubt an ounce of gold is a much better tonic than an ounce of laudanum.

SHOES.—The French soldiers in the Crimea wear wooden shoes, which are said to be a preventive against consumption. They must be nice articles for tender feet.

DRY GOODS.—The falling off in the imports of dry goods at New York, for the last year, from the total of the preceding year, amounted to $15,864,874.

HIGH STYLE.—The New York Sunday Courier says that the tickets to a colored ball, recently given in Gotham, were $10 apiece.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

In 3000 cases, inoculation against yellow fever was successful in New Orleans.

The Earl of Southesk has appointed a missionary on his estate. Many estates need them.

The Life of Charlotte Bronte, author of Jane Eyre, will shortly appear in England.

Schiller's tragedy, "Die Braut von Messina," was played on his birthday at Weimar.

A London flunkey lighted a match in a room full of gas—exp'osion—flunkey floored.

A five hundred dollar Bible is offered for sale in Philadelphia.

Dr. Kane thinks the Polar Sea will be reached and explored.

Rev. Charles Wadsworth, of Philadelphia, received $500 as a Christmas gift.

Mr. William Trail, Jr., of Tewksbury, was lately thrown from his sleigh and killed.

George Peabody, the London banker, has given $15,000 to the Peabody Institute, Danvers.

No letters can be sent through the mails unless pre-paid by stamps.

A rabid cat bit a little girl in Lockport, N. Y., and the child died.

Albert H. Brown, one of Train & Co.'s captains, recently died in this city.

Our government ought to keep a large naval force in the Japan and China seas.

Dr. O. W. Holmes lately drank "a bumper to Maine in the juice of the pump."

Forty thousand dollars' worth of property was lately destroyed in the great fire at Memphis.

A blind minstrel in New York "plays on a harp of a thousand strings."

The editor of the Albany Express grew frantic about the pleasures of sleighing, lately.

One man recently stabbed another in Jersey City, in a dispute about the Baker trial.

The gentleman who caught the eye of a young lady is requested to throw it back.

A. T. Stewart & Co.'s (N. Y.) weekly sales have reached half a million dollars.

Mr. Knapp, a native of Newburyport, Mass., is mayor of Newport, England.

Some scamp plundered the Dartmouth, Mass., almshouse of Thanksgiving turkeys.

The schooner Gen. Scott was seized at New Orleans for fillibustering proclivities.

"OLD MASTERS."

The almanacs for the present month ought to have among their current warnings, "about this time look out for the old masters." Two or three times in the course of the winter, many original works of Titian, Raphael, Murillo, Vandervelde, Poussin, Teniers, Guercino, Rembrandt, etc., are exposed for sale at public auction. There is no doubt of their being genuine originals—for the catalogues say so. Fortunate Americans! While these old masters command in Europe from 5000 to 20,000 guineas each, they are knocked off here at prices ranging from $50 to $100. Another thing has struck us in view of the repeated sales of these old masters, their industry must have been little less than marvellous. Since we can remember, about forty thousand cords of their works have been disposed of, and yet the supply seems inexhaustible. In the mean time our artists—fellows of merit—are starving for want of patronage, and doomed to see cracked canvasses smeared with red ochre and asphaltum, purchased with avidity, at fabulous prices.

SPIRITUALISM.—"W," a correspondent of the Boston Post, whom we know, and know to be a man of veracity, clear sighted and logical, has been describing in that journal some most extraordinary performances effected through spiritual "mediums." The demonstrations set at naught the theory of gravitation and were truly so wonderful that none but seers could be believers. The phenomena witnessed by the inspired author of our favorite infant melody, when—

"The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed to see the sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon,"

were nothing to those modern marvels which "W" witnessed with his own eyes.

LECTURES.—The editor of "The Flag of our Union" would reply to numerous calls upon him to lecture in various parts of New England, that he can only comply with such demands upon him in this connection, as shall admit of his returning to Boston at an early hour each morning. To lyceums in the vicinity of this city, any evening will be given which is not already engaged.

PLYMOUTH ROCK.—At the celebration of the landing of the Pilgrims, in Montreal (the first held in Canada, and a brilliant affair), there was a picture of Plymouth Rock, surrounded by American, British, French, Sardinian and Turkish flags. Queen Victoria's portrait also smiled on the representatives of the revolted North American colonies.

BRITISH ANNEXATION.—The kingdom of Oude, in Hindostan, the revenue of which is ten millions annually, is about to be annexed to the British East India possessions. Why does England blame us for doing in America what she is doing in Asia?

A GOOD ANSWER.—A lady ordered her Irish servant girl to say she was not at home when certain persons called. "Yes, ma'am," replied Bridget, "and when I go to the praste, will I confess it as your sin or mine?"

THE NORTHERN LIGHT.—The detention of the Northern Light, in New York, for alleged fillibustering, will show the London Times that its charges against our government are false.

THE PRIZES.—Let all who have been striving for the prizes now close up their lists, and send in the names with the money, that the award may be made.

IMMIGRATION.—The decrease in the Irish immigration to New York for the past year, was fifty per cent.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION.

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"Blessings in Disguise," a story by Mrs. SOMERVILLE CURRIER.

"The Bachelor's Requiem," a poem by FRANK FREELOVE.

"The Robber of St. Gervais," a tale by HORACE B. STANDFORD.

"Angels are here to-night, Mother," verses by H. RICH.

"A Horse at a Raffle," a humorous sketch, by THE OLD TUN.

"At Memory's Shrine," stanzas by WILLIS E. PARSH.

"A Story of Beethoven," translated by FRANCIS A DUTCHER.

"The Three Callers," verses by FANNY BELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Steam Frigate Merrimac, the first of the new fleet of this class, ordered by Congress.

Representation of the City of Lisbon.

View of St. John's Church and Parsonage, at Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Picture of the Academy at South Berwick, Maine.

A series of views and localities in Salem, Mass., covering two pages, and showing some of the most conspicuous of the buildings, localities, etc., of that fine city.

Portrait of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

Closing Scene in "The Tempest," recently represented at the Boston Theatre.

A whole page picture, representing fine specimens in Ornithology.

☞ The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ Every copy of THE FLAG and one copy of the PICTORIAL when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

There is only one paper in Egypt, a small monthly, at $4 per year.

In Turin, the Chevalier P. Stradd offers a prize of 1000 francs for the best treatise on the organization of field hospitals.

A "Mining Exchange" is to be formed in London. Some forty three millions sterling are there embarked in mining companies.

One of the St. Petersburg journals states that the news of the London Stock Exchange reaches St. Petersburg, every day, in eleven or twelve hours.

In Sweden, a man who is seen four times drunk is deprived of his vote at elections, and the next Sunday, after the fourth offence, is exposed in the churchyard.

A "monster concert" is about to be given at Vienna, and out of the proceeds a handsome monument is to be erected over the spot where Mozart's bones lie.

Among the list of articles exported from Switzerland, appears the item of "snails," of which 925 quintals were sold for foreign consumption during the months of October and November last.

The Italian sculptor, Chelli, has just terminated the model of the prophet Ezekiel—one of those destined to be placed at the foot of the column which the Pope is causing to be erected at Rome.

A Genoa paper announces a discovery at Rancla, in Egypt, of a great number of coins of the period of the Ptolemies, together with other Egyptian antiquities, said to be of great interest.

The average export of gold from Australia is stated at $55,000,000. A new crushing machine has been successfully introduced at the mines. This machine obtained from 14 tons of ore 118 ounces of amalgam, worth $200.0.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Each moment as it passes is a meeting-place of two eternities.

He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven.

There is nothing that God has judged good for us, that he has not given us the means to accomplish, both in the natural and the moral world.

No mortifications which virtue exacts are more severe than those which ambition imposes upon the love of ease, pride upon interest, and covetousness upon vanity.

Every man of a great mind is the property of the whole community. His example is contagious; his influence is the standard of thought; he is himself a practical school.

Each new form of existence results from the decay and destruction of some preceding form; and the law seems fixed that everything which is destroyed is capable of some other life.

True piety and morality, are inseparable or rather they are the same spirit differently manifested. Piety is love with its face towards God, and morality is love, with its face towards men.

Discontent is a sin that is its own punishment, and makes its subject, in themselves; it makes the spirit sad, the body sick, and all enjoyment sour; it arises not from the condition, but from the mind.

The heavens are a point from the pen of God's perfection; the world is a bud from the bower of his beauty; the sun is a spark from the light of his wisdom, and the sky is a bubble on the sea of his power.

Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding; it dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant; accommodates itself to the meanest capacities; silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible.

Joker's Budget.

Why is a woman living up two pair of stairs like a goddess? Because she is a second Flora.

Why is an omnibus strap like a conscience? Because it is an inward check to the outer man.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath," as the man said when he hurled a squash at his enemy's head.

What would you say if you wished a reverend Doctor of Divinity to play a tune on the violin? Fiddle-dee-dee (D. D.)

What is the difference between an auction and a social kiss? One is the sale of effects—the other, the effects of a sail.

A farmer out west, in announcing his willingness to take a wife, declares that as he is himself in *clover*, he has no objection to take a lady in *weeds*.

Law runs strongly to petrifactions. Make a man District Attorney, and his heart will become two thirds stone. Force he gets half through with his first murder case.

When lectured upon his previous conduct to the fair sex, a volatile lord, who had just married, exclaimed: "Madam, you may depend upon it, this is my last folly."

"Paddy," says a joker, "why don't you get your ears cropped—they are entirely too large for a man?" "And yours," replied Pat, "are too short for an ass."

An Englishman paying an Irish shoeblack with rudeness—a dirty urchin, but a wit, said: "My honey, all the polish you have is on your boots, and I give it to you."

A private of the Galloway Rifles was recently standing sentry, when an officer, nothing that he had a black eye, accosted him, and charged him with having been fighting. "Please, sir," the soldier replied, "wasn't it for that you engaged me?"

Quill and Scissors.

A letter from San Francisco, Cal., says: "The extent of the cigar business here is immense. A single stand within a large hotel has been rented for $20 per day, payable daily. I know of another of less note for which $4000 per annum has been paid for the last two years. The consumption of the 'weed' in California is awful."

The line of steam packets running between Baltimore and Boston—and which has been in operation about one year—has met with so much success that the company are enabled to declare a dividend of *twenty per cent.* This is almost, if not quite, unprecedented in steamboat stock hereabouts.

Dr. Luther, astronomer at the Observatory of Bilk, near Dusseldorf, Prussia, the discoverer of four or five of the small planets between Mars and Jupiter, has recently discovered a *fifteenth unknown star* in the constellation of the Fishes. It is to be called T. Piscium.

The Campbell Minstrels, at a recent concert in St. Louis, offered a gold watch as a prize to the gentleman who brought the largest number of ladies. Mr. David J. Dickey escorted no less than *seventy-five* fair comers, and consequently fobbed the fever.

Gibson, the sculptor, is at present in Rome, engaged in modelling one of the bas reliefs for the bas e on Queen Victoria's statue, in the group to be placed in the Houses of Parliament, representing the queen enthroned between Justice and Clemency.

At Cincinnati, the native place of Miss Eliza Logan, the young men, at the close of her late brilliant engagement, tendered her a complimentary benefit, at which she was presented with an elaborately wrought and costly service of silver.

Shakspeare's "Tempest" has been produced at the Munich theatre with great success. The Augsburg Gazette says that this is the first time the drama has ever been played in its original form in Germany.

In 1855, 766 ships, 715 barques, 1148 brigs, and 597 schooners arrived at New York. There also arrived 1 Sardinian frigate, 1 Hanoverian galliot, 158 American steamers, 4 British, and 1 French war steamer.

The ship-builders at Bristol, England, who have received orders for constructing gun boats, have been directed by government to hasten their completion; and workmen are now employed upon them night and day.

The Bangor Whig states that there was surveyed at that place, during the year 1855, some 211,669,193 feet of lumber, which is a larger amount than in any former year, except 1848, when it reached 213,000,000 feet.

If you desire to be certain that your eggs are good and fresh, put them in water—if the buts turn up they are not fresh. This is an infallible rule to distinguish a good egg from a bad one.

The American Bible Society has resolved to publish the Gospel by John, and Acts of the Apostles, in the Spanish language, so that they may be used as a school-book in St. Domingo.

The best cough mixture that has been made consists in a pair of thick boots, mixed with lots of air and plenty of exercise. People who hug the stove, and grow fat, will take notice.

The patent office has been very active during the last year. One thousand nine hundred and forty-six patents were issued, the largest number any one year has ever yet shown.

Jonathan Coit, who recently died at New London, Ct., left $48,500 to the various churches and charitable institutions of that place, in sums varying from $250 to $10,000.

In Porto Rico, the cholera is raging to an alarming extent on the north side of the island. In one village, containing a population of 1000 inhabitants, 300 died in 42 hours.

The Cincinnati Sun says that such is the stagnation of business in that city that there are over ten thousand applications for relief from the public charities.

The debt of Tennessee, according to the Governor's message, is $8,744,856, of which about $4,750,000 consist of bonds issued in aid of railroads.

In Philadelphia, on New Year's day, Colonel Sanford distributed 5000 loaves of bread to the poor of that city, at his opera house.

The total length of the Mississippi and all its tributaries, is 51,000 miles, which is more than twice the equatorial circumference of the earth.

An emigrant ship from Liverpool recently arrived at New York, bringing 346 Mormons, bound for Salt Lake City.

The total number of deaths in Philadelphia last year was 10,686; Baltimore, 5475; Boston, 4075.

During the first six months of the past year, there were printed in Germany 3879 different works.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Edmunds, Rev. George Moody, of Virginia, to Miss Mary B. Harris.

By Rev. Mr. Peabody, Mr. William Arthur Jackson, of Philadelphia, to Miss Annie Dalton.

By Rev. Dr. Bingham, Mr. Thomas H. Bastis to Miss Sarah A. Leavitt.

By Rev. Mr. Miner, Mr. John Shepard to Miss Susan A. Rogers.

By Rev. Mr. Dexter, Mr. Samuel A. Green to Miss Mary R. Gould.

By Rev. Mr. Skinner, Mr. Frederick A. W. Gay to Miss Sarah A. Hammond.

At Roxbury, by Rev. Mr. Ryder, Mr. William H. Brinton, of Boston, to Miss Lucia H. Giles, of Biddeford, Me.

At Cambridge, by Rev. Mr. Skinner, Mr. David J. Dunham to Miss Frances M. Eastman, both of Boston.

At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Wilde, Mr. Joseph B. Chandler Jr. to Miss Jane Dyer.

At Scituate, by Rev. Mr. Barrett, Mr. Asa J. Merritt to Miss Hannah A. Curtis.

At Dorset, by Rev. Mr. Woodbury, Mr. Joseph P. Thompson to Miss Adelaide Hinckley.

At Shebbleland, by Rev. Mr. Bailey, Mr. Thomas Oliver to Miss Sarah P. Campbell.

At Beverly, by Rev. Mr. Thayer, Mr. Samuel Goodridge, Jr., of Manchester, to Miss Mary E. Burton.

At Taunton, by Rev. Mr. Pollard, Mr. Nathan Wilmarth to Miss H. Jane Lloyd.

At New Bedford, by Rev. Mr. How, Mr. Isaac Hathaway to Miss Lois Ireland, of Fairhaven.

At Worcester, by Rev. Mr. Adams, Mr. Merrick D. Marcy to Miss Martha D. White.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. William D. Ring, 71. Mrs. Mary Ladd, 70. Mr. Herbert D. Kimball, 32, widow sarah Burroughs. Mr. John Carne, 66. Mr. James White Atchison, late of Calcutta, 52. Mrs. Mary K. Wendt, 41. Mrs. Mary C. Allen, 27. Mr. Rufus Ryder, 35. Mrs. Emma S., wife of Alfred Goss, Esq.

At East Boston, Mrs. Caroline S., wife of Rev. James W. Sykes, 37.

At Somerville, Mrs. Amantha J., wife of Mr. Albert Spear, 25.

At Lynn, Mrs. Catharine Clary, 44. Mr. Henry C. Davis, 26.

At Salem, Mrs. Mary C. Tracy, 69. Miss Mary Roper, 32. Mr. James Henshaw, 73. Mrs. Mary H. Whipper, 56. Widow Sarah Dunpack, 75.

At South Danvers, Mr. Henry Osborne, 66.

At Beverly, Mr. Israel Green, 36.

At Newburyport, Mr. Isaac Knapp, 80. Miss Deborah T. Tunnard, 82. Capt. Amos Fowler, 56. Mrs. Mary Carr, 80.

At New Bedford, Widow Sarah Gould, 96.

At Lancaster, Mr. Ragnus Willard, 56.

At Worcester, Widow Harriet P. Parker, 73.

At Concord, Miss. Marie Louise, wife of Mr. George P. Smith, 32.

At West Barnstable, Mr. Thomas Crocker, 58.

At Cornwall, Vt., Mrs. Ruth Barber, 88.

At Weatherfield Conn., Rev. William Bentley, 83.

At Needham, Mrs. Kilm, wife of Lieut. Moses Kimball, 58.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

"BIRDIE."

BY WILLIE E. PABOR.

"Birdie!" years are buttons three,
Spotless in their purity;
In her heart are angels three,
Throned in stainless majesty.

Truth is warder of the scrip,
Hope uplifts the future's scroll;
Love keeps watch and guards the hours,
Crowning them with buds and flowers.

Often look they in disguise
From the "windows of her eyes,"
Till her glances seem like gleams
Only seen in holy dreams:

When the angels come and go,
Waving wings as white as snow,
O, for "Birdie" may life's vial
Have no drop of toil or trial!

But the purest stream of pleasure
Flow for "Birdie" without measure;
Till the silver chain is broken,
Till the parting word is spoken:

Then may "Birdie's" spirit rest
Where the good are ever blest;
In the land of endless love,
In the beautiful above.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

INTRIGUE.

BY MRS. MARY MAYNARD.

Farmer Beckwith's old farm-house looked unusually lively one fine sunny summer afternoon (it matters not how many years ago), for it was brightened by the presence of a gay city party, and the old walls were resounding to merry, laughing voices; and happy faces were seen at the windows, and light figures flitted through the old orchard; and altogether, the old house wore quite a different aspect from what it usually did. A very gay party they were, from Silas Warren, Esq., the head of it—and who had left a large portion of his accustomed dignity behind him in the city,—down to his fair, young daughter, Ida, the youngest of the company. Very merry they all were, out there in the midst of the green woods and grassy fields; far from the dusty, wearisome streets, the endless blocks of buildings, and all the sights and sounds of the city.

Mr. Warren had long promised his child this visit to the old farm house; and when the hot July days came, and her city home was no longer bearable, he took her and a party of favorite young companions out into the country to spend several weeks.

Mr. Warren was a portly gentleman of forty, or thereabout, with dark hair, through which little silver lines were faintly visible; fine eyes, very dark and expressive—but not always expressing what they ought to; for Mr. Warren, though an excellent man, and very benevolent and kind-hearted in cooler moments, was of a passionate and easily excitable temper, and at such times his eyes were apt to display his feelings more than his words. In his youth he had been called handsome, and at forty, after making allowance for good living and luxurious indulgence, he was still a good-looking man, and he knew it. The next in years to him came three Misses Meyrick, the two eldest of whom were engaged to be married, and were accompanied by their admirers, while the youngest was Ida Warren's chosen companion and friend.

The Misses Mary and Anna were commonplace young ladies enough, interesting to nobody on earth but their own parents and their own lovers. But Laura, the youngest, was of a different stamp, and with her twin brother, would have furnished an interesting study for any one desirous of searching out the mysteries of human nature and the human mind. Possessed of scarcely one excellence, she yet passed among her friends as a pattern of daughters and sisters: and parents held her up to their own children as an example worthy of imitation.

Her brother was as faulty a character as herself, and having less art to disguise his habits and inclinations, had already been the object of some unpleasant but whispered remarks; confined, however, to his own acquaintances, and unsuspected by his friends. He was now in his twentieth year, and already initiated into all the mysteries of a gay, young man's life in a large city. A very unfit companion was he for Ida Warren—beautiful, innocent Ida Warren,—who treated him with so much kind cordiality, as the brother of her friend, and strove to look over those blemishes that could not fail to shock and distress her, hide them as he might.

It was a pity Mr. Warren had not exercised his judgment a little more, when he allowed these dangerous young persons to become the intimate friends of his daughter, even though they were the children of a once valued friend. But Ida liked them, and they seemed to love his darling in return, and that was sufficient to win the way to the father's heart direct, setting aside the many agreeable qualities and accomplishments possessed by the young people themselves, that rendered them pleasant companions even for one so many years their senior.

Ida Warren, even as a child, had won the love of all around her, and as she increased in years and beauty, her father's heart swelled with pride and affection for his cherished and only child: and his regret for the loss of a deeply loved wife was made more poignant by the reflection that she could not behold their daughter from the far-off spirit land, that he supposed she had gone to; for truth to tell, Mr. Warren had very indistinct ideas of a future state, and certainly indulged in no such "sentimental delusions" as to suppose the spirits of those we love hover around us.

Not he, indeed! Death, to him, was a dark, horrible mystery, a something he did not like to hear named, or to encounter in the shape of tombstones and coffins; a something that struck terror to his heart when thought of alone, or in the silence of the night; a fear altogether unrelieved by the afore-mentioned belief, or delusion, or whatever it is, so dear to many of our race.

But with Ida it was quite different; and from the day, when yet a little child, she had seen her mother laid in the grave, she had associated the mournful trappings of death with the memory of that mother, and so far from causing horror or dismay, they brought back sweet, sad memories of that fair, calm face, resting on its soft pillow, the white hands crossed on the stilled heart, and the whole aspect so peaceful and calm, that Ida sometimes longed to go away out of the noisy city world, and lie still and quiet in the green graveyard beside her mother.

Ida was a very beautiful girl at sixteen (the time when our story opens), with dark, soft curls falling around her white shoulders, and large, thoughtful eyes, that everybody said were black, and everybody found out were gray. But it mattered little what color they were, so long were the black lashes that shaded them, and rested on the delicate cheek. She had a very peculiar way of shaking back her long curls and raising those eyes when talking with her friends—a very peculiar and bewitching manner it was, and so thought young Egerton Beckwith, the farmer's handsome grandson, who soon became her special cavalier, escorting her to all the romantic and beautiful places around Abbevale, and being frequently blessed with one of those earnest, thoughtful, and inquiring glances.

Young Beckwith had lived all his life (some twenty years) in the old farm-house at Abbevale, and it, and its surroundings, were dearer to him than aught else the world contained. Little wonder was it, then, that he was charmed with the unfeigned praises Ida bestowed on his home; and when he found she admired some places and prospects that he had always thought peculiarly beautiful, they at once became friends.

Egerton Beckwith had been brought up under the careful guidance of his grandparents, and from his earliest youth had been taught that religion, the worship of his Maker, was the first object of life. How great, then, was his astonishment, his horror, his distress, to find that Ida, the beautiful, sensitive, gentle Ida, on whom a kind Providence had lavished innumerable gifts, who revelled in the possession of wealth, health, and happiness, was as a heathen in her total ignorance of all appertaining to religion, its mysteries, its beauties, its power.

He was a very young man then, and lacked the courage that in after years enabled him to stand forth in the defence of his God and religion; but even then he longed to show these gay, young people the road to happiness, as he had found it; and if he had thought, with a sigh, of the many advantages a city education had given them over himself, the regretful feeling passed with the knowledge of their one great want.

Young Meyrick and his sisters were obliged to treat Egerton with some show of civility from the known regard that Mr. Warren had for him; but in secret they repaid him for their condescension by the most contemptuous coolness, which became actual rudeness after they discovered the friendly feeling existing between him and Ida. But proof alike to their sneers and remarks, he kept a steady watch over Ida, attending to her wants, and providing for her comfort, in a tender, brother-like manner, that was both felt and appreciated by the young girl.

If, as it often happened, they spent the warm afternoons in the shade of a neighboring grove, there was always a pleasant seat provided for Ida. Did they in their rambles behold beautiful flowers on the sides of the mountain (for Abbevale could boast of a very respectable mountain), the next morning beheld a magnificent bunch of them laid beside Ida's plate, when the party assembled at the morning meal. A fine moonlight night caused her to wish that they might have a sail on the bright sparkling waters of the river, and the next day a boat made its appearance at the landing, and the whole party embarked in high spirits, while Ida, who knew to whom they were indebted for the pleasure, gave her little hand to Egerton, to assist her in, and raising those beautiful eyes for an instant to his, whispered a word of thanks that more than repaid him for all he had done for her.

"I am getting tired of this dull life," said young Meyrick, one morning, as the party were lounging about after breakfast. "Can't we get up something new-to-day, just to prevent our all dying of the blues?"

"I second that motion," exclaimed his sister Laura, throwing down her novel, and going up to where he sat balancing his chair on two legs, and puffing his cigar smoke out of the window.

"Well, what shall it be, sis? I see you have some plan in your head."

"A picnic down by the river, and a rustic bridge built over the stream at the turn where it is so narrow."

"What an idea! Who do you suppose is going to build rustic bridges such weather as this? And as for a picnic, the very word is sickening."

"But I want it, and will have it," was Laura's answer, and Mr. Warren entering at that moment, she danced gaily up to him, and repeated her request, begging at the same time that he would join in her scheme.

"Certainly, Miss Laura; anything that you propose we shall all be too happy to assist in."

And so after some little demur on the part of young Meyrick, which was silenced by an impatient "Do be quiet, Fred," from his sister, it was agreed that the day should be spent as she proposed, viz.—the morning in erecting a tent and a little bridge, and the afternoon in holding a picnic in the former. Many girls would have felt annoyed that her opinion had not been asked, but Ida Warren had no jealousy in her nature, and she showed no displeasure that her father should so readily acquiesce in another's proposals.

But when the old farmer lowly remonstrated against any such risks being run, she joined her voice with his in entreating them to give up anything attended with such danger. Vainly, however; for Laura, more and more determined to carry her point, as the others opposed it, exerted all her influence with Mr. Warren, and the matter was settled. Some men from a neighboring farm were summoned; the gentlemen assisted as far as they knew how, and, pleased with the novelty, they really exerted themselves; and Laura had the satisfaction of seeing a beautiful little structure span the narrow but rapid stream, and of hearing them say it was completed, at an hour that still allowed them time to enjoy themselves, and entertain a party of friends, who came all unexpected, save by Mr. Warren and his fair young friend.

On leaving their work, the men had warned them not to place too much weight on the new bridge; and above all, not to jar it, as in that case, the hastily constructed foundation might give way. The afternoon wore away with mirth and music, and all, merry and light-hearted, enjoyed the coming of the cool evening and the attendant breeze, that rippled the bright waters of the river, now sparkling in the moonlight. Ida had resisted all entreaties to pass over the frail bridge; but when they had all done so, she felt rather ashamed of her cowardice, and was not sorry to see Fred Meyrick coming back to make a last effort to induce her to consent.

"It is only half a dozen steps; now don't be so timid." And then seeing she was willing to go, he snatched her hand and hurried her on to the little arch.

Laughing aloud at his victory, and rendered foolhardy by his frequent crossing, he paused in the middle of the bridge, and holding Ida firmly, so that she could not escape, he stamped heavily once, twice, three times. Screaming with terror, she struggled to free herself from his grasp, and at the same instant, their friends on the bank heard the fearful sounds of the parting planks, as the tottering structure swayed to and fro in the air.

With a cry of agony, Mr. Warren sprang upon the shaking timbers, but only to hurry the catastrophe; for ere another word could be spoken, he, together with his child and her companion, were hurled violently into the deep, eddying waters, and lost sight of amid the confused mass of planks and poles that had composed the unfortunate bridge.

The party, for an instant, stood speechless at the suddenness of the accident, and then, with one accord, arose a chorus of screams, and two of the Misses Meyrick fainted, while Laura rushed wildly to the edge of the stream, as if to plunge in. But a strong arm drew her forcibly away; and young Beckwith, having thrown off his coat, boldly plunged into the stream, and swam to where Ida's white dress was now seen in the moonlight. He had nearly reached her, when his left arm was tightly grasped, and young Meyrick's pale countenance rose above the waters.

On the impulse of the moment, Egerton violently flung him off, and unheeding his wild entreaty, "Save me! save me!" once more struck out in the direction of the glimmering white mass, which he could now see was rapidly whirling round in the eddies. She was reached at last, and as he clutched her dress in his hand, a silent thanksgiving went up from his heart, deeper than words can explain or express. It was a wild struggle; for the rapids, certain death, lay below. But the bank was gained at last, and Ida, all pale and corpse-like, was in his arms.

Pale faces and trembling forms stood that night around the couch whereon rested the form of Ida Warren. The physician had arrived, and as he bent over her, the father watched in breathless agony the changes of his countenance. But soon their fears were quieted, and as the word passed through the house, "she will live," Egerton Beckwith solemnly raised his eyes to Heaven, and there was registered his thanksgiving vow.

"At any time, at all times, command my purse and services. I never can repay you for what you have done for me."

"Mr. Warren, if the day shall come that I ever occupy a station equal to your own, have I your consent to seek your daughter's hand and heart?"

The father started, and after a moment's confusion, replied:

"My dear young friend, you ask for something not in my power to bestow. Ida's hand has long been promised to the son of my old friend. It is a union we have long contemplated with pleasure, and I should be deeply grieved to see it broken off."

"And is Miss Warren aware of this engagement?" Egerton Beckwith asked, with ill-concealed emotion.

"Not yet. Mr. Meyrick and myself thought it best that they should be kept in ignorance of it until such time as their sense of duty would have some weight. Young people are not always the best judges of what is best for themselves, you know."

"What is that, dear, that you are hiding so carefully from me?" laughingly asked Laura Meyrick, as she entered Ida's room on the same day the above conversation took place. It was the last day of their visit to Abbevale, and the rest of the party had already returned to the city.

Ida blushed, and attempted to talk of something else; but Laura was not to be so baffled, and so, by dint of coaxing and caress, she persuaded the young girl to tell her what it was.

"A letter from young Beckwith? Why, Ida, what can that great country boy have to say to you in a letter?" And then seeing how bright the angry flush rose on her friend's cheek, she added, more mildly: "But perhaps he thinks, because he saved your life, that you will give him your hand and fortune by-and-by! Am I not right?"

Unwilling to listen longer to her raillery, Ida gave her the letter, which, after perusing, she returned, with the remark:

"He is a better fellow than I thought him. Write an answer, dear, and I will give it to him myself for you."

As Ida crossed the room to get her desk, Laura slipped the open letter into her pocket, and then seating herself at the writing-table, watched the little fingers as they nervously guided the pen over the paper, tracing the kind words dictated by the heart of the writer.

Three hours afterwards, the carriage drove from the door, and Egerton hastened to his room to open the envelope slipped into his hand by Miss Meyrick. One start, alone, betrayed his astonishment, and with a heavy sigh, he tore the enclosure in pieces—it was his own letter returned.

Time hurries on, and when we resume our tale, it is after a lapse of over a year. It is September, and the bright autumn sun is shining through the richly tinted curtains of a magnificently furnished parlor. The occupants, a lady and gentleman, are, seemingly, heedless of the richness and beauty around them; for on the countenance of the one there are marks of passionate anger, and the other seems almost equally disturbed.

"Did she dare to say that?" exclaims Mr. Warren; for it is our old acquaintance; "dare to add insult to disobedience? Now, by Heaven, this is too bad! and she shall learn to yield her will to mine, or she is no longer my child!"

"My dear husband, do not excite yourself; you do not know the consequence of getting in a passion. Perhaps it will be better, after all, to let her have her own way. Of course it will be hard for Frederick, but he must sacrifice his own feelings sooner than cause ill feelings between you and your daughter."

"Don't talk to me, Laura. I say she shall marry Frederick, or not one cent of my money shall she ever touch!"

As it was evident that Mr. Warren was now angry enough, Mrs. Warren prudently withdrew, while he, after a stormy interview with his daughter, in which she steadily refused to have anything to do with young Meyrick, proceeded to fulfil his threats, and actually made a will, bequeathing his whole fortune to his wife and her brother.

It was a most unjust and outrageous proceeding, but Laura Meyrick had not married Mr. Warren without understanding exactly how he might be ruled, and she now exercised the power thus gained in gradually undermining his love for Ida. Completely under the control of his beautiful, talented and fascinating young wife, the old gentleman continually found fault with his daughter for betraying the dislike Laura's duplicity had created in her bosom. But when his pet scheme of Ida's marriage with Fred was threatened with destruction, his anger knew no bounds; and the flame, gently fanned by his wife's artful pleadings in Ida's favor, caused the explosion and ending we have seen.

For several weeks after the affair of the will, Ida remained a prisoner in her own room; partly by her father's orders, and partly from a wish to escape all communication with her step-mother. But Mr. Warren, when cooled by time and reflection, repented of his injustice to his gentle child, and though ashamed to ask Laura to return the fatal paper he had left in her keeping, secretly perpetrated another, in which he did justice to his daughter. This he carried about with him, but even this did not appease his conscience; and as he missed Ida, so did he seek to drown the painful recollection of her absence by partaking freely of wine, and the consequence was that he began to have symptoms of apoplexy, a disease his medical attendant had always warned him of.

Half dizzy with the pain in his head, he went to his office, one day, and there found all in confusion. A forgery of a large amount had been committed, and his head clerk had clearly traced it to Frederick Meyrick, Mrs. Warren's brother. The sad news, broken as gently as possible to the old gentleman, produced fearful results, and coming in addition to his previous excitement, realized the physician's forebodings.

Mr. Warren was borne home insensible, and laid in the splendid chamber from which he never more should move until carried out to take his place in that narrow house, of which, in life, he had entertained so deep a dread. In silent agony Ida bent over him, vainly endeavoring to recall intelligence to the staring, glassy eyes, that had not responded to the loving of her own.

But hours passed ere Mr. Warren recovered sufficiently to recognize his child, and when he did, the power of articulating was gone forever, and he could only lay his hands on her head in silent blessing. For a day and a night she sat beside him, and then the attendant physicians insisted on her leaving her post for a few hours' rest; and when she again saw him, it was all over!

Poor Ida mourned sincerely for her parent, forgetting all the pain his harshness had caused her, and only recalling the thousand acts of kindness, the unnumbered benefits he had bestowed. For the future, she felt no fear, knowing that his fortune was amply sufficient to provide both for her and his wife. How great, then, was her astonishment, when summoned to hear the will read, to learn that she was penniless, or what amounted to the same thing, that her claim to any part of the property depended on her marrying young Meyrick. Stunned by the shock, she sat speechless and immovable while the remainder of the document was read: but what was her surprise to see Mr. Grey, the head clerk, who had been requested by the lawyer to be present, stand up and deny the validity of the will, on the ground that there was another and later one, that he, Mr. Grey, had been witness to, in which the property had been rightfully bequeathed to Ida Warren, only child of the deceased.

Of course, such an announcement made a great sensation, and an immediate search was made for the missing paper; but as nothing of the kind was forthcoming, the general belief was that Mr. Warren must have destroyed it; and Ida, refusing to be advised by those who wished her to dispute it with Laura and her brother, left her father's house to seek her living in the world. As it always happens in such cases, there were many who pitied the young orphan; and others, again, who rather rejoiced that one who had always been their superior, should suffer such a reverse.

But Ida had friends who came forward and offered her a home, with all the respect and kindness that they would have shown had she been her father's heiress, instead of a poor girl, destitute and friendless; and on learning that she could be of service to them, she willingly accepted their offer. It was Mr. Grey and his wife who thus sheltered the child of him who had been their benefactor, and in so doing they felt as if making some return for the father's kindness.

Mr. Warren had paid his head clerk so liberal a salary, that at his employer's death, the latter was able to bring a handsome sum into a good business, in which he was offered a partnership, and thenceforth the road to prosperity was open to him.

They had one little girl of their own, and to the instruction of this child Miss Warren devoted herself, determined to drive away all regretful memories of the past, by keeping her mind employed on this work of grateful love. But with all her resolution, she found her strength tasked to the utmost in the struggle to banish her cares, not the least of which was the insulting pertinacity of young Meyrick, who seized every opportunity of renewing his unwelcome suit.

In vain she returned his letters unopened, in vain attempted to pass him in the street. His importunity became so annoying at last that she was forced to ask Mr. Grey's interference. His suspicions still more aroused by this strange conduct of the young man (for Mr. Grey had always suspected him of wronging the orphan), he sought him, and after a very amicable conversation, departed, more than ever convinced that the lost will was still in existence. No good was to be done by anger, and he dissembled his real sensations, contenting himself with securing Ida from further molestation, by advising the young man to wait patiently for some change to take place in her sentiments, assuring him that he was injuring his own cause by too great anxiety.

Relieved from this annoyance, Ida felt more courage to endure the slights of some and the pity of others; the cold, unrecognizing glances of those who had once flattered and caressed her, and the over-strained sympathy of those who, if they had any feeling on the subject, she well knew it was not compassion for her. The days were passing pleasantly; she was gradually becoming more and more attached to her little pupil; and if she sometimes sighed over the loss of her once numerous acquaintances, it was not alone for the fine friends her poverty had estranged, but one, she knew, who set little value on earth's glittering and deceitful treasures.

We have too long neglected our old friend, Egerton Beckwith, whom we last saw at the farm-house at Abbevale, sad and disappointed at Miss Warren's supposed scorn of his letter, which asking, as it did, nothing but her friendship, he scarcely thought merited such a pointed slight.

It was some surprise, but no sorrow, to old Mr. Beckwith, when some few weeks after the departure of their guests, his grandson announced his intention of preparing for the ministry, and soon after left Abbevale for that purpose. The old people regretted his absence, but at the same time rejoiced that he should devote his talent to that, above all other professions; and a liberal share of the savings of their years of industry and economy was added to his own somewhat limited income.

As Mr. Warren had held no communication with the Beckwiths after his marriage with Miss Laura Meyrick (and they lived very quietly after Egerton went away), it happened that the death of their former friend was not known until nearly a year after it took place, and consequently two, after the first meeting of Egerton and Ida. When made acquainted with this change, the young man's first impulse was to proceed at once to the city, and offer his services and sympathy to the young girl, who, he rightly judged, must deeply feel the loss of so kind a parent. But then came the recollection of the significant answer his first offers of friendship had received; and he shrunk from exposing himself to another insult.

"She is young and rich, and surrounded with friends; why should I seek for what she cannot bestow? Would that I could drive her from my thoughts, when, for aught I know, she may be the wife of another. I will strive once more to overcome this hopeless passion."

But striving and accomplishing are two different things; and so Egerton found that, spite his good resolutions, the image of the young girl still haunted him; and even when seeking refuge from his thoughts in his studies, those dark eyes still seemed to come between him and the somewhat dry theological work he was attempting to peruse. Strange that so hopeless a passion should fasten itself so firmly into a man's soul, that neither time, nor coldness, nor good resolves, nor earnest efforts, can efface it! But with all the clouds that obscured his prospects, young Beckwith at times felt an inward conviction that love, pure and unselfish as his, would be rewarded at some period, and the event proved that he was not mistaken.

Three years from the time they parted, Egerton and Ida accidentally met in New York city, whither the young man had gone to visit the family of one of the professors of the college, with whom he was a great favorite. Words cannot describe his astonishment at learning the state of Ida's pecuniary affairs; and he now repented of the pride that had prevented his making inquiries sooner.

There was apparent coldness on both sides for the first few times they met; for Ida felt justly hurt that his pretended regard should have ended as it did, and he could not but remember the unnecessary slight he had received. But glad to see one of her old friends, and one that had always borne a larger share of her regard, poor Ida soon forgot to look coldly on Egerton, in her joy at meeting him; and he, as he looked into her beautiful eyes and read that joy, banished the remembrance of the pain she had once caused him. It soon became a habit to pass his spare hours at Mr. Grey's, and when jested with on the subject by his host's family, he openly avowed the reason, and had the pleasure of introducing the professor's wife and daughters to Ida.

Coming home from their house one evening [illegible]

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"There was one circumstance connected with your visit, Miss Warren, one unpleasant circumstance, that has always been a mystery to me. Will you, if there are no particular objections, set my mind at rest by explaining it?"

Now Ida was not conscious of having done anything to deserve blame; on the contrary, she rather felt herself the aggrieved party; but, nevertheless, the hand that rested on Egerton's arm trembled violently, and it was almost a minute before she could recover self-possession sufficiently to answer him in the affirmative.

"It is a strange question, Miss Warren," said Egerton, coldly; for he had felt that she was much agitated, and imagined he knew the cause, "a very strange question, and perhaps you would rather I should not ask it. But do not answer it unless you wish to. I have no right to demand your confidence."

They were passing under the bright glare of a gas-light, and Ida lifted her eyes to his face, astonished at his tone. There was something in those eyes that seemed to upbraid him for cherishing ill feelings, and laying his hand lightly on her own, he quickly said:

"Forgive me; I have had some things to try me since I saw you. But now tell me why you sent back my letter. What had I done to deserve such treatment? And why did you not tell me my fault plainly, instead of letting me puzzle and annoy myself by unnumbered conjectures as to the cause of the change in you?"

There was no answer; and when Egerton looked at his companion, large tears were rolling down her cheeks; for Ida instantly comprehended how the trouble had all arisen, and her heart ached to think of all the unhappiness they had suffered through Laura's treachery.

"I answered your kind letter immediately, Mr. Beckwith. Don't think any longer that I could have been guilty of such ingratitude to my preserver. I see now how our mutual mistakes have arisen, and also why my diligent search after the missing letter was fruitless."

As may well be supposed, a long conversation followed this confession, in which both acknowledged to so much unhappiness as the consequence of this blunder, that Egerton was induced to make a proposal to Miss Warren, which, if she accepted, would put it out of the power of enemies to create disturbances between them for evermore.

It would not do to repeat all he said on this occasion, as I am quite certain he never intended a third party to know what passed; but we may mention, without any scruples of conscience, that Ida listened with earnest attention to all he so earnestly said to her, and when he paused for an answer, there was one in the confiding impulse that induced her to lay her hand in his, and, for one instant, raise those speaking eyes to meet his own.

It was a new, strange feeling with which Ida that night sat and thought over the events of the last few hours. Betrothed, with her lover's fond words yet sounding in her ear, his parting kiss yet lingering on her cheek, his affectionate clasp yet warm on her hand. She was very happy in the knowledge of Egerton's deep and long-hidden love, and all that caused a feeling of regret was the remembrance of her own poverty. Could she have bestowed that wealth on him that had once been hers, could she even have brought a moderate dowry to her husband, her feelings would have been less painful; but Egerton's teachings had taken deep root in her heart, and she gradually schooled herself to feel content with the lot she could not change.

It was a bright summer day, much such a one as that on which we introduced our friends to the reader, when the young pastor of C—— brought his bride to her home. The long years of study and preparation are past, the highest hopes are crowned with success, and Egerton Beckwith realizes as he sits beside his wife, and shows her each successive beauty that surrounds their home, that his cup of happiness is full to overflowing.

And Ida, too, is happy in her own quiet way; and when her husband's people welcome the bride, and lavish unnumbered kindnesses upon her, she no longer regrets the want of wealth that even in her proud young days never brought her such sweet fruits.

The pastor's home is the abode of peace and happiness, and neatness and good taste are beheld on every side. And Ida shares with him the duties and labors of his charge. Her sweet voice and winning smile are welcomed at many a bed of sickness and suffering. She instructs the ignorant; she whispers hope to the despairing; she pleads with the erring. To her husband, she is what every good wife ought to be—a friend, a companion, a consoler in trouble, cheering him when the overtasked mind is gloomy and desponding, speaking of a bright future when disappointment is followed by discouragement. Such is Ida, and as such treasured by her husband as the best earthly gift Providence could bestow.

From the time that Fred Meyrick came in possession of his share of Mr. Warren's property, he indulged in the most uncontrolled dissipation; and not until he found his funds getting low, did he at all retrench in his extravagances. And even then he was not warned for long, but when all was gone, he applied to Laura for more.

This caused an angry dispute with them, and loud threats on the brother's part, but safe in the knowledge that her destruction would be his own, she obstinately refused him the slightest assistance, and with threats of vengeance for her selfishness, he left her.

From this time young Meyrick plunged deeper and deeper into crime, and at last became one of a regular gang of forgers and counterfeiters. He was gradually discarded by his friends, and cast off by the crowd of flatterers and hangers-on, that had gathered round him in the days of prosperity. Reckless and hardened, he grew bolder as his deeds became worse, and at last committed a forgery, that was immediately discovered, traced to him, and caused his arrest.

Mr. Grey had always kept his eye on this young man, from having had great suspicions of his honesty in the affair of the will, and a perfect knowledge of his guilt in the forgery committed on Mr. Warren, and discovered on the day of that gentleman's death, when it was all hushed up. It was through him that this last crime was discovered, and he made one of the party sent to search the prisoner's lodgings. In the miserable room he had occupied, in one of the worst streets of New York, the police officers found numerous proofs of previous guilt, and among the rest, the pocket-book of Mr. Warren, containing several important papers, and with others, the missing will, the cause of so much sin and sorrow.

We may as well finish the history of this wretched young man at once. He was tried, found guilty of the crime charged against him, and sentenced to the state prison for ten years, but did not live to serve out more than one-fourth of the time—poverty, dissipation and remorse having done their work, and closed a career unmarked by one truly great deed.

On obtaining possession of the will, Mr. Grey immediately took steps to inform Mrs. Warren that she must refund her ill-gotten property. Of course there was no alternative, and thankful to escape public disgrace, Laura left New York; and being still young and good-looking, and quite cast off by her family, she accepted an offer from the manager of a travelling company of play-actors, and is now one of their greatest attractions.

We will now return to the lovely home of the pastor of C——. It is again summer, and the garden that surrounds the cottage is blooming gay with bright flowers. At an open window, Egerton Beckwith is standing, evidently striving to conquer some emotion that had agitated him unusually. He is looking out on a magnificent prospect, a beautiful blending of earth, and sky, and mountain, and lake. But it is plain that he beholds not the loveliness of nature, for, as we look, we see the quivering lips move in silent prayer, the delicate hands unconsciously clasp; but there is a beautiful smile of grateful love on the upturned countenance, and we are satisfied that more joy has come to fill the hearts of the happy inmates of that pleasant dwelling-place. But why is Ida not beside her husband, to share his joy?

Let us follow him into this darkened chamber, where all tread lightly, and speaks happy words in hushed voices. Ida is there; and as she beholds her husband clasp his infant to his bosom, and hears the whispered blessing on both child and mother, there is no room in her heart for more happiness; and the tidings that she is again the possessor of gold and lands adds not one iota to her joy.

We could follow our friends through long years of content and worldly prosperity, but it is not necessary to particularize. The wealth that they possessed was shared with those whose lot had been differently ordained. They lived, not for themselves, but for the good of all it was in their power to benefit; and in making others happy, they secured continual joy.

THEM PERTATERS.

Many of our readers have no doubt read the following rich anecdote. It is old, but like good wine, it will bear repetition. Those who have never "read it," will thank us for reviving it from the oblivion into which it was fast falling: Several legislative gentlemen were dining at a Boston hotel; one of them asked Mr. D., a gentleman who sat opposite:

"Can you reach them pertaters, sir?"

Mr. D., extending his arm towards the dish, and satisfying himself that he could reach the "pertaters," answered:

"Yes, sir."

The legislator was taken aback with the unexpected rebuff from the wag, but presently recovering himself, he asked:

"Will you stick my fork into one of 'em, then."

Mr. D. took the fork, and very coolly plunged it into a finely-cooked potato, and left it there. The company roared, as they took the joke, and the victim looked more foolish than before; but suddenly an idea struck him, and rising to his feet, he exclaimed, with an air of conscious triumph:

"Now, Mr. D., I will trouble you for the fork."

Mr. D. rose to his feet, and with the most imperturbable gravity, pulled the fork out of the potato, and returned it, amidst an uncontquerable thunder-storm of laughter, to the utter discomfiture of the gentleman from B.—*New York Mercury.*

MAN A FAILURE.

A year or two ago, when the Millerite fanaticism was at its height, Mr. B., an eccentric old gentleman, in one of our western towns, was walking in the hall of the village inn, listening, at the same time, to the talk of a dissipated disciple, who was prophesying the prompt fulfilment of Miller's calculations. Mr. B. stopped, and in his short, bitter way, asked:

"Do you really think, now, that the world is soon coming to an end?"

"Certainly I do."

"And on the twenty-fifth of April?"

"As much as I believe in my own existence."

"And you do really pretend to believe that there is to be a regular smash-up of the whole world in less than three weeks?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, sir, I am glad of it! I consider this experiment of Man a miserable failure; and the sooner the whole thing is broken up, so much the better!"

Saying this, the old gentleman stalked off, muttering imprecations on the human race in general.—*Burlington Sentinel.*

COST OF BOOKS AMONG THE ANCIENTS.—What an immense reduction has been made in the price of books by the invention of the art of printing. It is recorded of Plato, that although his paternal inheritance was small, he bought three books of Philolaus the Pythagorean, for ten thousand denarii, nearly $1500. We are also informed that Aristotle bought a few books belonging to Speusippus the philosopher, for three Attic talents, a sum equivalent to about twenty-eight hundred dollars.—*Messenger.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

SORROW.

BY HATTIE HARRIET.

A sunbeam danced before me—
I blessed its genial ray;
A dark cloud brooded o'er me,
And snatched the beam away.

Kind hope was whispering softly,
Of future golden hours,
A spectre hand was on her,
And paled all her powers.

A flower of perfect beauty
Was opening to the light—
The frost-king saw and envied—
My flower was crushed that night.

The boam, the hope, the blossom,
Transplanted from this earth,
I trust to find in heaven,
Blessed with immortal birth.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

PROMISES AT RANDOM.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK.

PERHAPS there is no fault more prevalent among business men than that of making promises at random, making them only to please or quiet a customer for a while, without due thought, and then in the end meeting the promise only with disappointment. This is the case in all kinds of business. The merchant or the mechanic promises to pay a certain bill at a certain time. Perhaps he *hopes* that he shall be able to meet the pledge, but when the time comes, he finds himself no more able to pay than when he first made the promise. Of course this can have but one tendency. After a young man has made a few such promises and broken them, people will begin to distrust him. By-and-by he may be "caught in a snug place." He may have a note in the bank, and, unable to meet it, he runs out to borrow a little for a few days, just to help him over this pinch, but none of his friends have any money to spare. The fact is, they know not when they shall get it back if they lend it to the man who has disappointed them so often. They know he is perfectly honest, and that he means to pay, but they prefer to have their money where they can know when it will return. The result is, that the young man's note passes under protest to the hands of a notary, thus injuring his reputation at the bank, and causing him additional expense. Or he may raise the money of some street broker, by giving good security, and paying an exorbitant interest.

And how many mechanics lose their best customers by the same fault. A simple story of actual life, will show what we mean, and we hope convey a salutary lesson to those who may need it.

In a small but thriving village in this State lives a man by the name of Albert Brown. At the age of four and twenty he took to himself a wife, and in three years afterwards he opened a shop on his own account. He was a tin-worker by trade, and his work gave the utmost satisfaction. He had bought out the shop and interest of a man who had moved away, so he had a run of business already on his hands.

For a while all went on well; he had as much as he wished to do; his patrons were prompt in their payments, and his prospects were bright. His dwelling joined his shop, so that he was always convenient to his place of business. But at length there began to be murmurings among his customers.

"Albert," said his wife, one evening as he came in from the post-office, "Mr. Cummings has been here after the funnel you promised to make for him."

"Ah, has he?" returned the young man, looking up from the paper he had just opened.

"Yes, and he seemed quite anxious about it, for the weather is cold, and his family are unable to use their sitting-room just for the want of that funnel."

"Well, I must make it to-morrow."

"But you know you have promised to have Mr. Moore's cooking-stove ready to-morrow, and you have all the funnel to make for that, besides a boiler and tea-kettle."

"Yes, I know; but Moore'll have to wait. I must make that funnel for Cummings."

For some time Alice Brown sat in silence. Her face revealed a troubled mind, and her hand moved tremulously over the silken hair of her infant.

"Albert," she said at length, "you will pardon me, I know, for what I am now going to say," she trembled as she spoke, for she was not used to reprimanding her husband. She was a mild, modest little woman, and severity of language was something she could not use, unless, indeed, it may have been once in a while to her little son, who often tried her patience to the utmost.

"Go ahead, Alice," returned the young man, with a faint smile.

"I must speak, Albert, for I am sure you do not realize how you are injuring yourself. You do not realize, I fear, how often you disappoint your customers. Now I heard Mr. Cummings say he had better have sent to the city at once, and then he should have got his funnel in some kind of season."

"Then why don't he send? I never asked him for his custom."

"Ah, Albert, you do not mean what you say. You have asked for his custom. You have asked for the custom of all the people in town: and not only so, but in your advertisement you promise to do your work with promptness and despatch. Now listen to me calmly, for surely I am anxious only for your good. You have often promised people certain things at a given time, and you know how often you have disappointed them. Now why is it not just as easy to have your promises and performances agree, as to have them so often at fault? When Mr. Cummings came for his funnel, why could you not have made up your mind just when you could do the work, and then do it at all hazards? Of course, sickness is always a reasonable excuse."

"But you do not understand these things, Alice," said the husband, in an explanatory manner. "When I have so much work on my hands it is impossible always to tell just when such and such things can be done. I do them all as soon as I can."

"And yet, Albert, you disappoint your customers. Now just reflect a moment. You do all the work you have, but the trouble is, you do not do it at the time promised. Now, for instance: when Cummings came for his funnel, he asked you if he could not have it by the next day at noon. Instead of carefully considering what you had on your hands, and answering accordingly, you simply wished to please him for the time being, and told him he should have as he wished. But when he came for it, it was not done, and you thoughtlessly told him I should have it by night. This evening he called again, and again was he disappointed. His wife is now fretting, and he is angry; and he has good cause for it. And now look at to-morrow: you make his funnel to morrow, you must disappoint Mr. Moore, for his is an all day's job, no surely; and you know how particular he is."

"O, I know what you mean, Alice, but should like to have you take hold and try it. You'd find talking and doing two different things I'm thinking."

"Perhaps I should, Albert; but yet I'd make them both agree in the end. When I had promised Mr. Cummings his funnel I would have done it. Last night I would have called to mind all the work I had on hand, and if I had been sure that I could turn it off as promised without slighting in the evening, I would have spent the evening in the house; but had it appeared otherwise, I would have worked till midnight if necessary. Ere I would break a business promise, would work all night while my health and strength lasted. But there would be no need of this. Keep a book, and in it put all your work engaged, with the time at which it is promised, and then go at it. If a man wants such a thing at a given time, just refer to the work on hand, and if you find you can reach it without disappointing others, then promise him; but if you cannot do so, then tell him so plainly, and also when you can do it. Be sure no sensible man would find fault with this. Let people see that you will be prompt and reliable, and you need not fear of losing custom; but if things go on as this way much longer you must lose money, cannot be otherwise."

Albert Brown tried to laugh, but it was rather a ghastly performance. His wife had spoken the truth, and he knew it, but he made no promise for he did not feel exactly like owning up to the error.

Mr. Cummings was a good customer, and on the next morning Brown made his funnel. It took him until after ten o'clock to do it, and then he went to work upon the things for Moore. After dinner Cummings came in and got his funnel, but he was not so thankful to find it done as Albert hoped he would be.

Just at dusk, Mr. Moore came in. He had a heavy wagon with him, for the purpose of taking his stove away; but the boiler and tea-kettle were not done.

"I declare," said Brown, "I haven't got your job done yet."

"But how's that? You promised me that should have them to-night without fail."

"I know—but I had a funnel to make for Cummings, and it put me back."

"But you should not have engaged other work until mine was done."

"O, I had engaged this before yours."

"Then you might have calculated upon that, and not promised me as you did. Had you said to-morrow night as the time for me, I should not have left my work at a busy period, and ridden seven miles away from home for nothing."

"I am sorry, Mr. Moore; but really, I could not help it."

"Perhaps you could not," said Moore, with dubious shake of the head; "but you remember you bothered me in the same way last spring about my milk pans. I came twice for those before I got them."

Poor Albert felt ashamed, and he stammered out some apology.

"Now I'll tell you the truth," resumed Moore, rather severely. "I am just now very busy, and have several hands engaged to work for me, so I cannot leave them again. If you will finish the things and send them up to me to-morrow, I should like it, otherwise, I shall not want them."

Brown promised to send them up, and Mr. Moore took his leave. But the young tinman was not cured of his fault. Things went on as before, and Mrs. Brown was obliged to hear much complaint. The winter passed away, and in the spring another tin shop was opened in the village. A young man named Ames came to the place, and sought the patronage of the inhabitants. Within a month after this, Albert Brown found himself almost without a customer. To be sure he could make up any quantity of tin ware for peddlers, but this was not to his taste. The most profitable branch of his business was gone, for all his old customers now flocked to Ames's, where their orders were promptly answered.

"I declare, it is too bad," said Albert to his wife, as they arose from the supper table.

"It is too bad, Albert; but you ought not to complain of your old customers."

"I don't—but why should Ames come here?"

"He was asked to come here, Albert. You know the people had become tired of waiting your motions. And there is Mansfield, the tailor; he is also obliged to go without customers."

"I noticed that Mansfield's shop was closed as I came by," said Albert, thoughtfully.

"Then he's had to quit," resumed the wife. "I heard some time ago that the people would not put up with his negligence much longer. He is a good tailor, but no one could depend upon him."

For some moments Albert sat in silence and gazed into the fire. At length, while a sad expression rested on his countenance, he said:

"Alice, I cannot deny that I have lost all through my own fault. I remember what you have often said to me, and how you have warned me of this; and I know that all this could have been avoided had I but listened to you. But it's too late now."

"No, no, Albert! not too late," uttered Alice, moving to her husband's side, and putting her arm about his neck, "you can yet work on."

"But not here. We must give up this snug little house and move to some strange place."

"We'll move better so, than to live without business here."

"And could you be contented to give up this pretty house, Alice?"

"I shall be contented wherever your own good calls you, my husband."

Albert Brown kissed his wife, and shortly afterwards he went out. As he passed down the street, he saw a light in the shop which Mr. Ames occupied, and he went in. A friendly greeting ensued, and after some common place conversation Brown asked Ames how he prospered.

"O, very well," replied Ames. "I am doing very well; yet I can do better. My brother has sent me an offer to come to L——, and go into business with him. I was intending to call on you to-morrow to see if I could not make a trade with you. If I can sell out my heavy stock without loss I shall move, for my brother needs me, and the place will be far better for me than this. What say you now? If you will buy my stoves and manufactured ware at wholesale prices, you can have them, and I am off."

"How much will they all come to?" asked Albert, anxiously.

"The whole that I must sell will come to about three hundred dollars—not over that."

"I will give you an answer to-morrow noon," Albert returned.

This was satisfactory, and after some further conversation the latter left and returned home. He told his wife how the case stood, and she at once advised him to make the purchase.

"We can raise the money," she said, "and I suppose everything he has will sell."

On the next day Mr. Brown accepted Ames's offer, and as soon as a list of the goods was made out he paid the money over, and ere long he had the field once more to himself. He issued a new advertisement, and after enumerating the articles he had for sale, he added these significant words: "Try me."

And now Albert Brown commenced anew. He took a book and set down every order as it came in, and noted the time set for its completion. He now made no promises without referring to his book, and the consequence was, that he never failed to meet his engagements. And yet how simple it was. Ay, how much easier than the old method. How smoothly all went now. His work was more than before in quantity, and yet he completed it more easily than before.

The result was soon apparent. Customers flocked in upon him; his old friends returned, and within a year he was the most thriving mechanic in town. People from adjoining places heard of his promptness and faithfulness, and they came to employ him. Surely he never regretted the short sojourn of the other tinman in the village, nor did he ever fail to bless his wife, as each returning season found his coffers gradually but surely growing full.

And so it must always be in all the departments of business life. Try it, ye who have need, and see.

REWARD OF MECHANICAL GENIUS.

Notwithstanding the stale complaint that mechanical genius has to struggle against prejudice, and often dies poor and neglected, the invention which is really practicable and valuable appears to be very handsomely paid for. The profits for some patents for mechanical inventions in use in this country are enormous. The right to a portion of Ward's patent shingle machine was recently sold in Albany for $35,000. A portion of Robinson's sewing machine has also been sold for $50,000. This is an invention which can be carried in the pocket, and will enable the seamstress to do in one day, the ordinary labor of a week. Machines of this kind are about to be constructed in New Haven, Conn., by the Messrs. Jerome, at $10 apiece; the manufacturers are now constructing the machinery, and expect to sell orders in January. Howe's patent sewing machine yields, it is said, $50,000 for licenses to use it, and Singer's machine puts $75,000 into the pockets of the owners. Rights to the use of a corn planter have been sold to the amount of $30,000. Clark's patent pump sold for $30,000. A portion of the right to an apple paring machine, $2000. Cramer's patent ice broke, $2000, &c. &c. Such rewards as these are certainly stimulating to mechanical genius, and the only wonder is that there are not ten mechanical inventions where one now exists, when there is so wide a field for its exercise in almost every department. —*Scientific American.*

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES

Dedicated to the Midshipmen of the Naval Academy, Annapolis, on board the U. S. Ship Preble, July, 1850.

BY BLANCHE D'ARTOIS.

God speed you gallant bark, my lads!
While ploughing through the foam;
Propitious be the gales that waft
The staunch old Preble home;
May angels' eyes keep watch o'er ye,
Soft breezes fan your brow—
From dangers of the treacherous sea
May Heaven defend you now!

Bright eyes are glistening for ye, lads!
There's many a heart at home
Beats anxiously, as o'er the waves
The stormy breezes come;
Yet, hearts that high, and tear-drops swell,
And mirthful sallies stay
Upon the lip when tempests tell
There's danger on your way.

In foreign lands, where'er you rove,
O may you ever find
That charity, that binds in love
The world of human kind;
And, dancing proudly o'er the foam,
Careering o'er the billow,
O safely glide your rocking home,
O sweetly sleep your pillows.

God speed your gallant bark, my lads!
O, could we sisters come,
We'd teach you all, you homeless ones,
To love your ocean home.
O, how we envy you, bold things!
Your vessel's onward way,
To the merry tune old Neptune sings,
The livelong night and day.

You're welcome back to home, my lads!
The news has swiftly come;
Old Preble bore you safe away,
And bears you safely home;
And when the navy rides the sea,
Ye shine the wild sea foam;
Remember, lads! we think of ye—
The hearts best high at home!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

OUR DISTRICT SCHOOLMASTER.

BY ANNA MACDONALD.

Many years have passed, since I went to school in that dear, old, comical-looking, brown school house, under the shadow of the hill. But the memories of those winters and summers when I trudged merrily to and fro over the shortest quarter of a mile ever known in my experience, seem yet very fresh, pleasant and beautiful. I always carried my dinner, and O, the splendid times we children looked forward to at noon-time, which was generally an hour long. Our dinners despatched with speed, and the sweeping of the school room achieved, we were then all ready for "Puss in the Corner," "Blindman's Buff," etc., which all who have played them know are very exciting games, and highly productive of bumped heads, torn pantalettes, loss of breath, and physical exhaustion generally; besides being very convenient arrangements for those who are particularly pleased with having their toes trodden upon.

I remember one day when we were in the full glory of a game of "Puss in the Corner," that John Sykes, one of the big boys, in a headlong dash for a corner, made a slight miscalculation in the definition of a straight line, and brought up with a crash against the master's desk, and as a natural consequence, over it went, and its miscellaneous contents lay scattered on the floor.

Hostilities were immediately suspended, and we stood aghast. There lay books, slate, a pile of corrected compositions, three rosy apples, a present to Mr. Gray from bright-eyed Lizzie Adams, rolling innocently about under the benches. But worse than all, the inkstand had had the insufferable impudence to empty its ebony-colored contents all over the floor, the new register, containing all our names, and the new copy-book, in which the master had just set new copies. Nothing had escaped, and what to do we knew not.

This was the first week of the winter school; we had a new teacher, and we did not yet know what his disposition was, whether pacific or pugnacious, and we were rather doubtful as to the consequences of the noon's performance. However, the overturn of the desk was a fixed fact, and there was nothing for it but to prepare and arrange matters as well as we could for the advent of the master in the afternoon. John Sykes, rubbing his side, and looking rather solemn, wiped up the ink with the papers that could be gathered from our dinner baskets, we all the while eating him soundly for being so careless.

Before it drew near the time for the master to arrive, everything was prepared; the desk was in its place, its lid concealing the dreadful sight within; the black stains on the floor alone betrayed us. Never did a schoolmaster behold a more meek, well behaved set of scholars than we were, when Mr. Gray rapped on the window with his ferule that afternoon to call the school to order. He sat down before his desk, not an eye but was riveted to the book; we dreaded to look that way, and I imagined John Sykes's feelings must be something like those of John Rogers at the stake.

The master's clear voice broke the spell. "I find my desk in rather a more disorderly state than when I left it. You played 'Puss in the Corner,' this noon, did you not?" Some one ran against the desk and overturned it. It was an accident, and I freely forgive whoever did it, with a request that you will be more careful in future."

We were thunderstruck. The reaction was overwhelming. Forgiveness with a mild reproof, when we expected stern questionings, and a whipping for the most guilty one! We had been taught to look for very different proceedings, by the experience of former administrations in the Millwood district. It was too much for poor John Sykes, who was as tall as the master, and who had always been the bravado of the school. The kind voice, and the gentle manner, touched a tender chord in his heart, and he could not study his algebra lesson in peace, till he had been to Mr. Gray, told him that he was the unintentional author of the mischief, and begged his pardon for his carelessness. It was an astonishing condescension for John Sykes, he was usually as stubborn as a mule, and possessed the "don't care" spirit to perfection, and we all looked at him with perfect amazement, when he went up with such a penitent expression to the master's desk. Mr. Gray spoke to him with such a beautiful smile, that John was his firm friend ever after, and Mr. Gray marched triumphantly into the affections and confidence of us all, on the bridge of that simple act. It was the first time in our lives that a schoolmaster of Millwood district had behaved in such a manner about so serious a matter, accident or not, and children as we were, it gave us new opinions upon the system of moral government. After that, Mr. Gray had the respect and love of us all, from little Amy Foster, just learning to spell cat, up to John Sykes, and Dick Mansfield, studying algebra, and geometry.

There were about thirty scholars in "our district," of all sizes and ages. I was fourteen that winter, and quite a tall girl for my age, but there were several girls in school, older than I. Bessie Allen, Carrie Mansfield, Mary Ellis, and Cora Linn. Bessie was a merry girl of sixteen, the veriest witch I ever saw, the heroine of merry makings, and the most ingenious of fun-contrivers. We called her our attorney general. (We had a class in United States government that winter.) Carrie Mansfield was postmaster general, because she had been appointed to transact all business of weight and importance connected with the post-office, an edifice consisting of three books built up together, and covered with a pocket-handkerchief, which was lifted for the deposition of inch-square letters, postage twenty-five cents, *paid*. Mary Ellis, queen of the spelling contests, was elected secretary of state. Cora Linn, a fair haired angel, whom we all loved, acted as secretary of the home department, while I was named secretary of war, an appointment which I stoutly declined, till I found I was reduced to "Hobson's choice, that or none," for secretary of the navy did not mean anything, and ditto of the treasury would have been splendid, but unfortunately there was no money to be taken care of.

My office was a responsible one I can tell you, for on me devolved the task of arranging amicably, all little squabbles, and of being a mediator between contending parties, excepting all cases in which I was a party myself, then, of course I could not act. Was not ours an august cabinet, gentle reader? But I have not told you about the president yet. She was dear, lovely Agnes Foster, the pet and delight of the whole school. Not a girl that did not trust and look up to her, nor a boy, but would give up the best sliding-place, and resign the swiftest sled to her. She was sixteen, fresh and lovely as the roses of June. She and her little sister Amy were the only children of their widowed mother. They were very poor, now, and Agnes was striving to gain an education sufficient to qualify her for the situation of teacher in some academy or select school. To her we went for sympathy in childish troubles, to her we carried a knotty question in grammar, or a puzzling sum in fractions; the same kind smile always comforted us, and her calm mind and patient skill helped us speedily to overcome the difficulty.

Agnes was beautiful, though she seemed perfectly unconscious of it, and that was the greatest charm of all. The girls were always praising her, calling her eyes "blue violets," and her hair "braided sunbeams," her cheeks "damask roses," and her teeth "pearls set in coral." But she always laughed, and told us we need not imagine she believed our nonsense, that we must see her through green spectacles, etc. Mary Ellis said, "sure enough, the glasses are love, and the bridge and bows are made of your goodness." We called this very smart of Mary Ellis, and admired it enthusiastically. We used to imagine that Mr. Gray stayed at her desk longer when he wrote her copies, or explained her geometry propositions, from some unaccountable reason, than he did to any of ours, and Mary Ellis actually declared that Mr. Gray's eyes had a peculiar expression when Aggie Foster was reciting, but of course it was all imagination, we thought. Mr. Gray "boarded round," and great were the preparations at home, and great the joy of the delegation from the family, when it came their turn to escort the master home with them from school.

The tea-table was set with mince and pumpkin pie, doughnuts, cheese, dried beef, pickles, and from two to five kinds of preserves. The more viands the table could be made to contain, the better, for no precious culinary stores were spared when Mr. Gray came. The parents admired him as much as the scholars, for he had a kind word and a cordial smile for all, from the old grandmamma, holding her knitting work in the corner, with thin and withered fingers, to the innocent baby creeping about the floor. He could talk of politics and agricultural improvements with the fathers, with as much ease, and to as perfect satisfaction, as he could invent new games, and tell little stories for the children. In short, all regarded him as a paragon of teachers, and the most charming of men. Joseph Gray was indeed a pattern young man. He had come into the town the week before school was to commence, and stopped at the village inn. None knew from whence he came or whither he was going, he did not take pains to gratify any one's curiosity on those points. When school-meeting night came, and the committee men of Millwood district assembled in the old school-house, Joseph Gray presented himself there as a candidate for the office of teacher. He declined presenting testimonials, acknowledged himself a stranger to all in the town, but he asked for a month's trial, and if at the end of that period the district were not satisfied, he would resign the situation, and require no compensation for the month's time. This was rather a singular proposal, but it was a very generous one certainly; and after some consultation, Deacon Sykes and Squire Ellis agreed to install Mr. Gray lord and sovereign over our seven by nine brown school-house. Mr. Gray had informed the committee that he was as well qualified for the post as district school teachers are generally expected to be, and expressed himself ready for the examination. Armed with a formidable array of geography and arithmetic, Mr. Ellis and Major Thornton commenced operations. They considered themselves an examining committee "par excellence," "*on fait*" at all puzzling questions, and attacks upon points least expected. Many a poor youth had they led into an arithmetical or grammatical quagmire, in which he floundered, and vainly endeavored to escape. This time they found their match. Mr. Gray was a little more than enough for both of them. Ready on every subject, prompt and clear with an answer to the most far fetched question, the committee vainly tried to trip him up with an arithmetical problem, or turn a geographical stumbling block in his way. Major Thornton's great gun, the famous plaster sum, among the miscellaneous questions in Adams's arithmetic, was fired off in such an expert and masterly manner, that it provoked an emphatic expression of admiration from that gentleman, and the proposition of Euclid, the triangle described in a circle, another bugbear, was vanquished in an equally sure and speedy manner. Squire Ellis took off his spectacles, Major Thornton looked at Squire Ellis, and that gentleman returned the compliment. The looks said as plainly as words, "*I* am perfectly satisfied, are not *you*?" In fact they were both delighted, and decided that if Mr. Gray's governing talents were as good as his book-learning, Millwood district had gained a treasure indeed. The school went on as I have before described it. Dismiss Mr. Gray indeed! Every day he increased in value, and every day we loved him better.

It was a perfect delight to look at him, for he was very handsome. A broad intellectual brow, from which masses of raven hair were carelessly thrown back; eyes, glorious with the light of enthusiasm and feeling; a mouth which for sweetness we thought could not be surpassed, and you have his portrait. Mr. Joseph Gray and his perfections formed a subject for perpetual discussion in the councils of that august body, "our cabinet." We might start upon themes as far removed from it, as the Black Sea is from Lake Superior, but by some strange and irresistible influence we always came round to Mr. Gray at last.

How amused he would have been if he had heard our nonsense. We used to wonder if his right ear ever troubled him with a certain burning sensation which the old sign declares one to experience, when people are saying good things of them; but we never ascertained the truth of the matter in regard to Mr. Gray.

From some inexplicable cause, we never could get Agnes Foster to say one word in praise or blame of Mr. Gray. She listened with a smile to our talk, but in vain we tried to extract any sort of an opinion of him, from her. One day Carrie Mansfield, fairly out of patience, broke forth: "Why, Agnes Foster, I do think you are the strangest girl I ever saw in my life. I've been trying here half an hour to get you to talk about Mr. Gray, and you wont even acknowledge that he's handsome. You think him a fright, I suppose. Pray tell me if you consider him at all to be compared in beauty to old Daddy Dickman, who carries the mail, and who wears a gray wig, and smells of whiskey!"

The tears came into Agnes's eyes. Carrie was melted in an instant, and begged pardon for her sneering tone.

"Indeed," said Aggie, "you do me injustice; those that say the least, sometimes think the most. Because I do not lavish praises on Mr. Gray so enthusiastically as you do, or talk myself breathless in admiration of his talents or his fine face, do you think I dislike him, or do not appreciate him? You are famously mistaken. He has not a warmer friend in school than myself, and I do not consider it necessary to say more. There he comes now."

We were in our seats and studying our lessons as demurely as possible—with a most unconscious air—when he entered the room.

December, January and February fled by, and it was the first of March, just a week before the close of school. How we dreaded to give up Mr. Gray. School had been a delightful place, and the winter had seemed so short. Where had the days and weeks gone?

One morning, two or three days before examination, Agnes Foster came to school with a very sad expression on her beautiful face, and her eyes looked as if she had been weeping. With eager questionings we gathered around our favorite, and in a faltering voice, she told us that her mother had the evening before received news that the bank in which her little all was invested had failed, and she had lost every farthing she possessed, and they had not even enough money left to pay their rent. They must leave Millwood and go to the far west, where they had relatives in moderate circumstances, who would lend them the money to pay for travelling expenses. What they were to do there she knew not. Poor Agnes, our hearts bled for her. Generous Cora Linn cried: "O, if I only had money of my own, I would make up all you have lost. In the midst of the sorrowful scene, Mr. Gray came in. Agnes flew to her seat, and bent her head over her book, to hide her tears from him; we all remained standing by the desk, undecided what to do. The master looked inquiringly from one to another. "What is the matter?" said he, at length; "and why do I see such sad faces? what has happened?"

Carrie Mansfield, without seeing Agnes's agonized telegraphings to her to stop, told Mr. Gray the story in a low tone. He changed color, and looked more agitated than we had ever seen him. He went and sat down by her side at once.

"Dear Agnes," said he, possessing himself of her hand, spite of her gentle opposition, "what is this that Carrie has been telling me? Is it indeed true?" Agnes bowed tearfully. "I feel for you deeply," said he, "tell your mother I will call on her this evening, perhaps I can be of service to you in your distress."

Agnes gave him one grateful, admiring look, and took refuge in her open geometry, lying upon her desk, to hide her blushes and tears. Mr. Gray said no more. We fancied he looked unusually happy all that day, but never did he seem so absent-minded. We did not know what had possessed the man. He sent out little Sammy Jones after an armful of wood, and when he appeared with it, told him to bring it to the desk and he would show him how to split it. In our history class, he said "very well," when stupid Sarah Wright put the Norman conquest in Queen Anne's reign, and smiled at Mary Jones when she told him that William Carlton was the author of the Gunpowder Plot.

Mr. Gray's eyes looked at Agnes, when she passed out of the school room, that afternoon to go home, with an intense expression that brought the crimson blush to her forehead. You may imagine we felt interested in Mr. Gray's movements that evening. Carrie Mansfield, at whose house he was boarding for a day or two, promised to watch his operations and report to the cabinet next day.

Joseph Gray came home to Squire Ellis's from school, and went straight to his room, staying there till tea time. Carrie told us his behaviour at table was as mysterious as it had been at school. Nobody could get him to talk. His cup of tea was untouched, and all he did was to keep up appearances with a piece of biscuit and butter in one hand, and pretend to cut preserved plums with the other. Tea over, that gentleman, telling Carrie with a bland smile he was going out, asked her for his hat. As soon as she had brought it, he seized it with nervous haste, and escaped from the house. Carrie began to guess at the state of matters, and she rightly guessed, Mr. Gray was in love with our Agnes. No wonder he was absent-minded, poor man. Young gentlemen in his state of mind are apt to be, and Carrie was not about washing the tea-dishes, wishing Mr. Gray success, and fancying how happy Agnes would be with him.

Mr. Gray made the best of his way to Mrs. Foster's abode, and his hand trembled as he knocked at the door. Agnes opened it; "How kind you are, Mr. Gray," she said; "my mother will be very glad to see you."

Stooping his head to enter the low door of the sitting-room, he took a chair beside Mrs. Foster, who thanked him with earnestness for his kindness in coming to them.

"Listen to me a few moments, Mrs. Foster," said he, "and perhaps you will alter your opinion of the disinterested benevolence you say I possess. I am come, not to restore you a treasure, but to ask one of you. You know the scripture proverb, 'from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.'"

Mrs. Foster was speechless with astonishment. Mr. Gray's eyes looked for Agnes. She was sitting the other side of the room leaning her elbow on the table, the color coming and going on her sweet face. Mr. Gray continued: "Allow me to tell you a short story. I came to Millwood an utter stranger to all its good people. I came, seeking to escape from the emptiness of fashionable life. I wanted to find a rest, and a refreshing change, in a quiet, simple life, in a country village, and see if I could be loved and esteemed for myself alone. Why should my wealth and position forever be my only title to public favor? I presented myself as a district school teacher, and was accepted. No time in my life has been happier to me than this winter, for I have felt a thousand times repaid for the sacrifice I have made, in assuming a humbler capacity than I ever dreamed I could fill contentedly, by the love I feel sure my beloved pupils have felt for me, and the kindness I have found everywhere. And my dear madam," Mr. Gray's voice became more earnest, "I seek your daughter, and I ask you to give her to me as the richest treasure I ever can possess. If I can teach her to love me," and he turned with a passionate glance to Agnes, who sat transfixed with astonishment, "I promise to devote my life to make her happy. Will you give her to me, if she herself is not averse to the transfer?"

The widow sat silent. She could not speak. At last she said: "You are too kind, too generous. I cannot realize all this. Agnes must decide. If she loves you as you desire, we are *too* happy;" and she left the room to hide her emotion.

"Agnes," said Mr. Gray, "you have heard my story. I have sometimes fancied that as a schoolmaster I could win your love; shall I fail to do so in my *new* capacity?" and again his eyes seemed to read her very soul.

Agnes made a brave effort to speak calmly. "Mr. Gray," she said, "how could I help loving you long ago? But I am not fit to be your bride—I am a simple country-girl—I know nothing of the world, and should disgrace you in your own rank. I am not worthy of you."

"Let *me* be the judge of that," said Joseph Gray, holding fast both her hands. "If you can love me, that is all I ask. To be loved for myself alone, is the proudest joy that could ever come to my heart. Dear Agnes, you have made me happier than I ever dreamed I could be."

The next day the story went flying all over the village, "how the school teacher had turned out to be a very rich man, who had only taught school because he liked it, and not at all for the eighteen dollars a month." "How he had offered himself to sweet Agnes Foster, and been accepted, and her mother had concluded not to go west at present," "and how Agnes would live in a magnificent house, and need not lift a finger." Everybody rejoiced at Agnes's good fortune. You can imagine there was quite an exciting time at the next meeting of the cabinet, and many significant looks were launched from roguish eyes at poor Aggie, who endured them with the patience of a martyr.

School closed and Mr. Gray went away. In two or three days came a thick letter directed to "Miss Agnes Foster, Millwood," in the same graceful hand that wrote the copies in our writing books.

In June, Mr. Gray came back to Millwood, what for, we could guess without the slightest difficulty. The roses that twined her hair were not so fresh and beautiful as "our Agnes," when she stood by Mr. Gray's side, on her wedding morning.

Cora Linn and Mary Ellis were bridesmaids, and they said so, and we all believed them, of course. Mr. Gray took Agnes away from us to his splendid home, and so the cabinet lost its president.

Jester's Picnic.

A philosopher lately "kicked the bucket," that is, went out of the "pail" of fashionable society in Ohio. On his death bed, he was called upon by Judge Buckram, for the purpose of ascertaining how he stood in the way of "effects." "Do you leave any inheritance for your boys?"

"Yes, sir, the best inheritance in the world—just enough poverty to keep them out of indolence and dyspepsia for the remainder of their lives." Having uttered this, he turned over on his side and expired gradually, like an afternoon in summer.

As a very respectable colored gentleman of Boston, a dealer in second hand clothing, was passing down Brattle Street to his place of business, some evil disposed person coming up behind him, threw a frozen cat and hit him on the back. Instantly wheeling to the right about face, the insulted citizen exclaimed, in a voice half-choked with indignation:

"I—I—I'd gib five dollars to any gemman who'd point out de obnoxious individual what frow'd dat freezed cat at me."

An amusing little incident occurred at a city hotel a few days ago. A verdant looking chap sat down to take "some fillin," as the immortal Joe Lawrence would say, and in a short time a waiter presented himself at the back of our hero's chair, and politely inquired—"Tea or coffee, sir?" "Tea," he answered. "What kind of tea, sir?" Greeny looked up in the waiter's face, and with considerable emphasis, said:—"Why, *store tea*, of course; I don't want none of your darned sassafras stuff."

Orfila, the celebrated doctor, being examined as an "expert" on a capital trial, was asked by the prisoner whether he could tell what quantity of arsenic was requisite to kill a fly. The doctor replied:—"Certainly, M. le President; but I must know beforehand the age of the fly, its temperament, its condition and habits of body, whether married or single, widow, or maiden, or bachelor. When satisfied on these points I can answer your question."

Impertinent Page (late from the dining room,)—"I say, cookey and Soosan, you make a previous fuss about a flea—how'd you like to be where the Black Sea sailors is now?"

Susan—"Where's that, imperance."

Page—"Why, master says it's where the Bug and the Nipper (Dnieper) meets in one bed!" [Sensation, and loud cries of "O!"

An unfortunate editor in Kentucky, thus addresses his delinquent subscribers: "Friends, we are almost penniless—Job's turkey was a billionaire compared with our present depressed treasury. To day if the price of salt was two cents a barrel'ed, we couldn't buy enough to pickle a jay-bird."

A person who was recently called in court, for the purpose of proving the correctness of a doctor's bill, was asked by the lawyer whether the doctor did not make several visits after the patient was *out of danger*? "No," repied the witness, "I considered him *in danger* as long as the doctor continued his visits!"

"Hallo, Tom, Jim's death on wood. Did you ever see him saw?" "No, but I saw him see. Ha! ha!" "That's nothing. I saw him see saw. What you got to say now?" "Why diss—dat if you saw him see saw, and I saw him see, he must be a *sawcy* nigger." "G'long, I see you want to run a saw on me."

A ship is evidently a most affectionate creature, and may be said to be in love, when she wants a "mate," when she is a fine (great sister ship), when she is "tender" to a "man of war," when she "hugs the wind," when she "runs down for a smack," when she is "after a consort," or when she is attached to a "buoy."

A Yankee down east has invented a machine for corking up daylight, which will eventually supersede gas. He covers the interior of a flour barrel with shoemaker's wax, holds it open to the sun, then suddenly heads up the barrel. The light sticks to the wax, and as night can be cut out, and sold in "lots" to suit purchasers.

The principal of an academy, in his advertisement, mentioned his female assistant, and the "reputation for teaching which she bears;" but the printer—careless fellow—left out the which, so the advertisement went forth, commending the lady's reputation for teaching she bears.

A tailor in London has invented a waistcoat on the principle of Colt's revolver—a garment with *four fronts*, useful to secure the charm of variety or to conceal shabbiness or grease spots, but particularly convenient as lessening baggage, by reducing four waistcoats to one.

The Old Colony Memorial publishes, for its marvellous readers, the story of a spiritual excursion, when a train of cars was run over the Old Colony road by spirits, and vouches for the truth of the wonderful narrative.

A resident of Chicago, being asked on his return from New York, what he thought of that city, replied that it was a fine place, but rather too far from Chicago to do much business.

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VOL. XI.

BE

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A STORY

CHAPTER

THE DOOMED

Assad was thrown into th
dungeons of the Khandak
remained three days ere he
his victuals being given to
hole in the wall, and always
dark. The place was long
not over four feet wide, and
as long. The only light wh
was through a small grated
and this let in only enough
to see the walls of his prison
gain a faint view of the love
still possessed. Assad had
much from confinement, for
new one, and the dungeon
well ventilated, though in
who constructed the place
of this thing. But the agon
the food was handed in, was
admitted fresh air from the
out, while the hole in the to
made for light served admir
off the impure air. The prin
ety concerning his own fate,
cerning the *fate* of his belov
feared any one would harm h
ishment, but he feared she had
into the hands of the Syudic
and that she would be forced
son Hassan.

On the morning of the four
confinement, the door of the d
ed, and a black slave entered
at once recognized as Mesrou
caliph's eunuchs and executi
stout, fleshy man, significan
and a fair share of humanity

"You are named Assad?"
as he stood before the prisoner
narrowly.

"Such is my name, O, se
holy and beloved prince."

"I have come to inform yo
row you die," said Mesrour, s
ly and carefully.

"Is it determined that I
for what I have done?" asked
uously.

"What else could you expe

"But I was most holily prov

"Ah, young man," returned
shaking his head dubiously, "
cuse suffice you, then not an
dad would be safe. If the C
Faithful were to excuse you on
can offer, then his rule would
murder become a pastime.
your affair, and he bid me reco
if you would deny any of it.
represented to him: The mann
ten others, was sent out by the
for you—or, mayhap, sent by
know Haroun the just mon
doings as his own. Daoish fo
you were two female slaves w
from our master's Syudic. A
found a horse belonging to the
roof. So Daoish took you wh
left five of his manikoks to lo
read, since the five manikoks
wounded while attempting to
nity to liberate you. In the m
the dead that has cost you y
was informed that the damsel
hhang into the leverage which
to drink for supper. He went
found it so, and thereupon he e
a simple blow upon the face,
have been justified in choppin
And no sooner had he done t
than you drew your sword and
at your feet. Now look and see
truly?"

"It is all true—every word
of it," returned Assad, sadly.

"Now what would be the s
our city of peace if others coul